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Diseases from Farm Animals

Farm animals including cows, sheep, pigs, chickens and goats, can pass diseases to people. As you know, farm animals are not like house pets and do not have places to rest or eat that are away from where they pass manure. Therefore, you should thoroughly wash your hands with running water and soap after contact with them or after touching things such as fences, buckets, and straw bedding, that have been in contact with farm animals, adults should carefully watch children who are visiting farms and help them wash their hands well.

Different types of farm animals can carry different diseases. For example, cows and calves can carry the bacterium *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, often called *E. coli*. This germ can cause bloody diarrhea in people. In addition children can develop kidney failure due to *E. coli* O157:H7 infection. Pigs can carry the bacterium *Yersinia enterocolitica* which causes the disease yersiniosis. Chickens can carry bacteria such as *Salmonella*, which causes the disease salmonellosis. Many of these germs are in farm animal manure.

Important Tip!

Cattle manure may contain germs that can make people, especially young children, very sick. To best protect yourself from getting sick, wash your hands with soap and running water after visiting a farm and after having contact with farm animals.



Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, mad cow disease): An infectious disease associated with cattle.

Brucella Infection (brucellosis): A bacterial disease associated with farm animals.

Campylobacter Infection (campylobacteriosis): A bacterial disease associated with cats, dogs, and farm animals.

Cryptosporidium Infection (cryptosporidiosis): A parasitic disease associated with cats, dogs, and farm animals.

Escherichia coli O157:H7: A bacterial disease associated with cattle (cows).

Q Fever (Coxiella burnetti) infection: A bacterial disease associated with cattle, sheep, and goats.

Rabies: A viral disease that can be associated with mammals, including farm animals.

Ringworm: A fungal disease associated with many farm animals, including cattle, pigs, and horses.

Salmonella Infection (salmonellosis): A bacterial disease associated with farm animals, especially poultry (chicken) and horses.

Yersinia enterocolitica (yersiniosis): A bacterial disease associated with pigs.