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Diseases Obtained from Wildlife

In most of the United States, it is against the law for you to own any wild animals or non-human primates (monkeys) without a permit. However, people sometimes come into contact with these animals. Like other animals, wild animals and primates can get diseases. Some of these diseases, called **zoonoses**, can cause illness in people. Since wild animals (including monkeys, raccoons, and skunks) can carry diseases that are dangerous to people, SCHD discourages direct contact with wildlife.

Listed below are selected diseases of wildlife, including primates, that can be transmitted to humans.

Important Tip!

Enjoy watching animals from a safe distance. Touching wild animals may harm you or the animal.



Baylisascaris Infection (raccoon roundworm): A parasitic disease associated with raccoons.

Brucella Infection (brucellosis): A bacterial disease associated with bison, deer, and other wild animals.

Giardia Infection (giardiasis): A parasitic disease associated with animals and their environment (including water).

Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (hantavirus): A rare viral disease associated with some types of wild mice.

Herpesvirus simiae Infection (B virus): A deadly viral disease associated with macaque monkeys.

Histoplasma Infection (histoplasmosis): A fungal disease associated with bat guano (stool).

Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis: A viral disease associated with rodents and house mouse.

Mycobacterium tuberculosis Infection (TB): A bacterial disease associated with deer, elk, and bison.

Plague (Yersinia pestis Infection): A rare bacterial disease associated with wild rodents and fleas.

Rabies: A deadly viral disease associated with wildlife especially raccoons, skunks, and bats.

Tularemia: An infectious disease associated with wildlife especially rodents, rabbits, and hares.