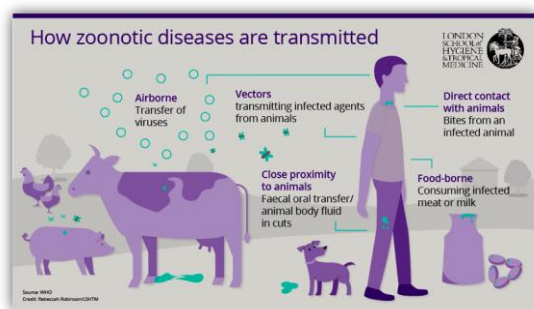


Welcome

Hope everyone survived this crazy weather from the past few days!! In this month's newsletter, we will share some tips on how to stay healthy around your pet. If you have any questions or have a topic you would like to hear about please contact our staff at 630-365-9599 or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net



The risk of getting a disease from a pet is low for most people, but some groups are more likely to get sick from the germs spread by pets, and their illness may be more severe. Young children, older adults, people with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to certain zoonotic (transmissible from pets to humans) diseases.

Pets are an important part of our lives, whether covered in fur or in scales.

Most American households have at least one pet. Did you know that having a pet can help improve your health? Having a pet can decrease your blood pressure, cholesterol, triglyceride levels, and feelings of loneliness. Pets can also encourage you to be active and to get outside.

While there are many benefits to having a pet, animals can sometimes carry germs that can make us sick. Zoonotic disease can spread between people and animals,

even our pets. In the past several years, we've seen outbreaks of illness in people linked to pets such as puppies, rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, turtles, lizards, geckos, hedgehogs and water frogs.

You might not realize that the everyday activities involved in caring for your pet can result in the spread of germs from pets to people. Handling pet food and toys, cleaning cages, and kissing your pet can pass germs from the pet to you. Pets can spread germs even if they look clean and healthy.

All of this can sound scary, but knowing about zoonotic diseases and the simple things you can do to reduce the risk will help you enjoy your pets and stay healthy. Following are four simple habits to help you, your family, and your pets stay healthy and happy.

1) Choose the right pet

Not all pets are right for all people. In addition to thinking about the pet's needs, consider who will be around the pet at home. Are there young kids in the house or maybe a relative over 65? Certain pets, including reptiles, amphibians and rodents, are not recommended for children 5 years of age and younger, adults 65 years of age and older, and people with weakened immune systems. Rodents and cats can carry diseases that can cause birth defects, so think about waiting to adopt one of these pets if your or someone in your home is pregnant. Talk to your veterinarian about choosing the right pet.

2) Keep your pet healthy

Keeping your pet healthy helps to keep you healthy. Make sure pets get a good diet, fresh water, shelter, and exercise. Regular veterinary care is also important for your pet. Many pets need routine vaccinations, de-worming, and flea and

tick control to protect them, and their owners from certain diseases. Every pet, whether it's a dog, cat, hamster, ferret, or iguana, should receive lifelong veterinary care. If you think your pet might be sick, talk to your veterinarian. Also, remember to include your pets in your emergency preparedness plans so you can keep them safe and healthy in an emergency.



3) Practice good hygiene

Washing your hands is one of the best ways to stay healthy around pets and can also protect you against other diseases. Always wash your hands after playing with, feeding, or cleaning up after your pet. Pets can contaminate surfaces in your home with germs; you don't have to touch your pets to get sick from the germs they might be carrying. Keep your pets away from your food and areas where food and drink are prepared, served, consumed, or stored. Always clean up feces from your yard and public areas to prevent the spread of parasites and other germs to people. If you're pregnant and have a cat, avoid changing the litter box, or wear gloves and scoop the litter twice a day.



4) Supervise kids around pets

Always supervise young children around pets, even trusted family pets. Children, especially those 5 years of age and under, can be of higher risk for pet-related illnesses because they often touch surfaces that may be contaminated, put objects in their mouths, and are less likely to wash their hands. Children are often the victims of bites, scratches, and are more likely to get seriously ill from certain diseases spread from pets. Don't let kids kiss pets or put their hands or objects in their mouths after playing with pets. Help them to wash their hands after they interact with any animal.



We all love our pets, but it is important to

know the risks that come with any animal contact, especially for people who are more vulnerable to certain diseases. Practicing healthy pet habits can help you enjoy your pets while staying healthy.

If you have any questions or comments, please email us at 31burn@sbcglobal.net or call 630-365-9599! If you have a subject you would like covered in our newsletter please let us know!

