



Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidelines and Policies

June, 2007

ZOONOSES

Diseases that are transmissible from animals to humans (or vice versa) are called zoonoses. Rabies is an example that most people know about but there are many others. It should be noted that zoonoses are **very rarely** encountered in the laboratory animal setting (particularly in the case of mice and rats obtained from commercial suppliers of laboratory animals) but can be of concern in “field research” that is done in the wild. It is far more likely for a person to injure themselves from an experiment or other mishap in the lab than to contact a disease from a laboratory animal. However, personnel should be familiar with zoonotic diseases present in the species they work with and should inform their physician that they work with animals.

The risk of zoonotic diseases can be greatly reduced through a variety of means, including use of protective clothes, prevention of bites and scratches, proper sharps handling procedures, appropriate surveillance programs, and prompt and appropriate post-injury treatment.

There are many sources of information on zoonoses on the web today. Several of these include “species-specific fact sheets” that provide useful summaries:

- [1. University of Illinois Zoonoses Fact Sheets](#)
- [2. CDC National Center for Infectious Diseases Zoonosis Information](#)
- [3. Zoonotic Diseases Tutorial- University of Wisconsin](#)
- [4. University of Pennsylvania Animal Zoonoses Information Links](#)