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Preventing zoonotic diseases

Back to Previous Page [PDF-354.01 KB] Details: Emerging Infectious Diseases urn:sha256:f245c88a3b39eae5891ab8142928e85091815ba8b663c45ce38b1ba3fa4cd0a9 text/plain text/plain Animals provide many benefits to people. Many people interact with animals in their daily lives, both at home and away from home. Animals provide food, fiber, livelihoods, travel, sport, companionship, and education for people across the globe. Millions of households in the United States have one or more pets. We might come into contact with animals in either urban or rural settings, during travel, while visiting animal exhibits, or while enjoying outdoor activities. However, animals can sometimes carry harmful germs that can spread to people and cause illness – these are known as zoonotic diseases or zoonoses. Zoonotic diseases are caused by harmful germs like viruses, bacterial, parasites, and fungi. These germs can cause many different types of illnesses in people and animals, ranging from mild to serious illness and even death. Animals can sometimes appear healthy even when they are carrying germs that can make people sick, depending on the zoonotic disease. Zoonotic diseases are very common, both in the United States and around the world. Scientists estimate that more than 6 out of every 10 known infectious diseases in people can be spread from animals, and 3 out of every 4 new or emerging infectious diseases in people come from animals. Because of this, CDC works 24/7 to protect people from zoonotic diseases in the United States and around the world. How do germs spread between animals and people? Because of the close connection between people and animals, it's important to be aware of the common ways people can get infected with germs that can cause zoonotic diseases. These can include: animal icon Direct contact: Coming into contact with the saliva, blood, urine, mucous, feces, or other body fluids of an infected animal. Examples include petting or touching animals, and bites or scratches. home icon Indirect contact: Coming into contact with areas where animals live and roam, or objects or surfaces that have been contaminated with germs. Examples include aquarium tank water, pet habitats, chicken coops, barns, plants, and soil, as well as pet food and water dishes. flea icon Vector-borne: Being bitten by a tick, or an insect like a mosquito or a flea. food icon Foodborne: Each year, 1 in 6 Americans get sick from eating contaminated food. Eating or drinking something unsafe, such as unpasteurized (raw) milk, undercooked meat or eggs, or raw fruits and vegetables that are contaminated with feces from an infected animal. Contaminated food can cause illness in people and animals, including pets. hazard icon Waterborne: Drinking or coming in contact with water that has been contaminated with feces from an infected animal. HEALTHLINE'S CORONAVIRUS COVERAGEStay informed with our live updates about the current COVID-19 outbreak. Also, visit our coronavirus hub for more information on how to prepare, advice on prevention and treatment, and expert recommendations.You can catch some diseases simply by breathing. These are called airborne diseases.Airborne disease can spread when people with certain infections cough, sneeze, or talk, spewing nasal and throat secretions into the air. Some viruses or bacteria take flight and hang in the air or land on other people or surfaces.When you breathe in airborne pathogenic organisms, they take up residence inside you. You can also pick up germs when you touch a surface that harbors them, and then touch your own eyes, nose, or mouth.Because these diseases travel in the air, they're hard to control. Keep reading to learn more about the common types of airborne diseases and what you can do to protect yourself from catching them.Many diseases are spread through the air, including these:Coronavirus and COVID-19A rapidly spreading coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, and the disease it causes, COVID-19, has been responsible for millions of infections and hundreds of thousands of deaths globally in 2020. Information on coronavirus and COVID-19 is constantly being updated as a result.While the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is not generally considered to be airborne, there may be some situations in which the virus can act like an airborne disease. These include certain clinical settings in which people are receiving intensive medical treatment. In usual situations, SARS-CoV-2 is spread through respiratory droplets after a person coughs or sneezes, but these droplets are larger than what is considered airborne.The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath. If you experience these symptoms, see a doctor immediately.The common coldMillions of cases of the common cold occur each year in the United States. Most adults get two or three colds a year. Children tend to get them more frequently.The common cold is the top reason for absences at school and work. There are many viruses that can cause a cold, but it's usually a rhinovirus.InfluenzaMost of us have some experience with the flu. It spreads so easily because it's contagious about a day before you notice the first symptoms. It remains contagious for another 5 to 7 days. If you have a weakened immune system for any reason, you can spread it to others longer than that.There are many strains of the flu, and they are constantly changing. That makes it difficult for your body to develop immunities.ChickenpoxChickenpox is caused by the varicella-zoster virus. If you have chickenpox, you can spread it for a day or two before you get the telltale rash. It takes up to 21 days after exposure for the disease to develop.Most people get chickenpox only once, and then the virus goes dormant. Should the virus reactivate later in life, you get a painful skin condition called shingles.If you haven't had chickenpox, you can contract it from someone with shingles.MumpsMumps is another very contagious viral disease. You can spread it before symptoms appear and for up to 5 days after. Mumps used to be quite common in the United States, but rates have declined by 99 percent due to vaccination.From January 1 to January 25, 2020, 70 cases in the United States were reported to the CDC. Outbreaks tend to occur in densely populated environments.MeaslesMeasles is a very contagious disease, particularly in crowded conditions.The virus that causes measles can remain active in the air or on surfaces for up to 2 hours. You're able to transmit it to others up to 4 days before and 4 days after the measles rash appears.Most people get the measles only once.Measles is a leading cause of death among children worldwide and was responsible for 140,000 deaths in 2018. It's estimated that the measles vaccine prevented around 23 million deaths from 2000 to 2018.The disease is less common in the United States and occurs mostly in people who haven't been vaccinated. There were 1,282 cases reported in 2019. As of March 2, 2020, there have been 12 confirmed cases in 2020.Whooping cough (pertussis)This respiratory illness causes swelling of the airways that results in a persistent hacking cough. It's at the height of contagiousness for about 2 weeks after the coughing starts.Worldwide, there are about 24.1 million cases of whooping cough every year, resulting in 160,700 deaths.In 2018, there were 15,609 reported cases in the United States.Tuberculosis (TB)TB, also known as consumption, is an airborne disease. This is a bacterial infection that doesn't spread easily. You generally have to be in close contact with a person who has it for a long time.You can contract TB without becoming ill or transmitting it to others.About 1.4 billion people worldwide have TB. Most aren't sick. About 10 million people worldwide have active TB.People with a weakened immune system have the greatest risk of developing the disease. Symptoms can appear within days of exposure. For some, it takes months or years to activate.When the disease is active, bacteria rapidly multiply and attack the lungs. It can spread through your bloodstream and lymph nodes to other organs, bones, or skin.DiphtheriaOnce a major cause of sickness and death in children, diphtheria is now rare in the United States. Due to widespread vaccination, fewer than five cases have been reported in the past decade.Worldwide, there were about 7,100 cases of diphtheria in 2016, but it may be underreported.The disease injures your respiratory system and can damage your heart, kidneys, and nerves.Airborne diseases usually result in one or more of the following symptoms:inflammation of your nose, throat, sinuses, or lungscoughingsneezingcongestionrunny nosesore throatswollen glandsheadachebody achesloss of appetitefeverfatigueChickenpox causes an itchy rash that usually starts on your chest, face, and back before spreading over the rest of your body. Within a few days, fluid-filled blisters form. The blisters burst and scab over in about a week.The measles rash can take as long as 7 to 18 days to appear after you've been exposed. It generally starts on your face and neck, and then spreads over the course of a few days. It fades within a week.Serious complications of measles include:ear infectionsdiarrheadehydrationsevere respiratory infectionblindnessswelling of the brain, or encephalitisWhooping cough gets its name from its main symptom, a severe hacking cough, which is usually followed by a forceful intake of air.Symptoms of TB vary depending on which organs or body systems are affected and may include coughing up sputum or blood.Diphtheria can cause marked swelling in your neck. This can make it difficult to breathe and swallow.Complications from airborne diseases are more likely to affect the very young, the very old, and people with a compromised immune system.For most airborne diseases, you'll need plenty of rest and fluids. Further treatment depends on your specific illness.Some airborne diseases, such as chickenpox, have no targeted treatment. However, medications and other supportive care can help relieve symptoms.Some, such as the flu, can be treated with antiviral drugs.Treatment for infants with whooping cough can include antibiotics, and hospitalization is often needed.There are drugs to treat and cure TB, although some strains of TB are drug resistant. Failure to complete the course of medicine can lead to drug resistance and return of symptoms.If caught early enough, diphtheria can be successfully treated with antitoxins and antibiotics.Airborne diseases happen all around the world and affect virtually everyone.They spread easily in close quarters, such as schools and nursing homes. Large outbreaks tend to occur under crowded conditions and in places where hygiene and sanitation systems are poor.Incidence is lower in countries where vaccines are widely available and affordable.Most airborne diseases run their course within a few weeks. Others, like whooping cough, can last for months.Serious complications and longer recovery time are more likely if you have a weakened immune system or if you don't have access to good medical care. In some cases, airborne diseases can be fatal.Although it's impossible to completely avoid airborne pathogens, there are some things you can do to lower your chances of getting sick:Avoid close contact with people who have active symptoms of disease.Stay home when you're sick. Don't let vulnerable people come in close contact with you.If you must be around others, wear a face mask to prevent spreading or breathing in germs.Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your elbow to cut down on the possibility of transmitting germs on your hands.Wash your hands thoroughly (at least 20 seconds) and often, especially after sneezing or coughing.Avoid touching your face or other people with unwashed hands.Vaccines can reduce your chances of getting some airborne diseases. Vaccines also lower the risk for others in the community. Airborne diseases that have vaccines include:chickenpoxdiphtheriainfluenza: vaccine updated every year to include strains most likely to spread in the coming seasonmeasles: usually combined with vaccine for mumps and rubella, and is known as the MMR vaccinemumps: MMR vaccineTB: not generally recommended in the United Stateswhooping coughIn developing countries, mass immunization campaigns are helping to lower the transmission rates of some of these airborne diseases.Read this article in Spanish. Facebook Twitter Linkedin Pinterest Mens Health Heart Health Know Your Heart Risks At the top of the CDC's list of primary risk factors for all chronic diseases are: smoking, poor nutrition, and sedentary lifestyle. Living a healthier lifestyle can help prevent heart disease. This includes: Eliminating all tobacco use Eating a heart-healthy diet Following an appropriate exercise program Managing your weight Eliminating as much stress as possible Eliminate all tobacco use All tobacco products raise the risk for chronic illness, not just cigarettes. There is no therapeutic use for nicotine. As soon as you stop smoking, your body begins to heal itself from the devastating effects of tobacco. Eat a heart-healthy diet One aspect of managing your heart attack risk factors includes eating a heart-healthy diet, including the right amounts of: Calories Cholesterol Fat Fiber Sodium To help, the federal government has established a food plate guide and food labeling laws. The food plate can help you eat a variety of foods while encouraging the right amount of calories and fat. To find more information about the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 and to find the right recommendations for your age, sex, and physical activity level, visit the Online Resources page for the links to the ChooseMyPlate.gov and 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines sites. Please note that the My Plate plan is designed for people over the age of 2 who do not have chronic health conditions. Maintaining a heart-healthy, balanced diet will help: Manage stroke and heart attack risk factors Prevent or manage other chronic diseases Help lose weight and boost energy Promote overall good health Follow and appropriate exercise program One vital step toward reducing your chances of having a heart attack is making the time to exercise. In today's busy world, people must schedule time to exercise. Choose an activity that you enjoy doing, then talk with your healthcare provider about an exercise plan that meets your individual needs. An exercise program will help manage almost all stroke and heart attack risk factors. Try to include moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 40 minutes each day, for at least 3 to 4 days per week, above usual activity at work or home. Regular physical activity will help promote health, psychological well-being, and a healthy body weight. Always talk to your healthcare provider about your healthy diet and exercise needs. Manage your weight If you are overweight, your healthcare provider will work with you to lose weight and lower your body mass index (BMI) to a normal or near-normal level. Making diet changes and increasing physical activity can help. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that adults ages 40 to 70 who are overweight have their blood glucose checked at least every 3 years, as long as their results are normal. If you have an abnormal blood glucose, your healthcare provider may recommend behavioral counseling to help you eat better and get more exercise. Eliminate as much stress as possible Learn stress management techniques to help you deal with stress in your home and work life. Stress increases hormone levels and inflammation that can lead to cardiovascular disease.

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