

ARE YOU AT INCREASED RISK AROUND RESEARCH ANIMALS?

These conditions may pose an increased risk:

1. Pregnant or planning pregnancy
2. Immune system compromise (such as HIV infection, cancer/cancer treatment, high-dose steroid medicine, diabetes, liver or kidney disease, valvular heart disease, spleen removal).

Contact EHS/Occupational Health at 858-534-8225 promptly for a private consultation.

IN THE CASE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

Serious Injury or Illness (Emergency)

Seek medical attention immediately.

Main Campus:

Thornton Hospital Emergency Room
858-657-7600

Hillcrest:

UC SAN DIEGO Medical Center Emergency Room
619-543-6400

Report work-related injury, illness, or symptoms to your supervisor as soon as possible. This includes chemical splashes, splashes to the eyes, animal bites or scratches, needle sticks, slips, trips, falls, allergic reactions, or any other accident or health problems related to the work environment.

Non Serious Injury (non-emergency)

Perform appropriate first aid, such as washing/rinsing a splash or bite. Notify your supervisor immediately. If medical attention is required, contact COEM for an appointment. Tell the health care provider your work involves research animals.

Non Serious Illness (non-emergency)

If you become ill with symptoms that may be related to your work or experience allergy-like reactions (rash, wheezing, shortness of breath, sneezing/runny nose, etc.) or if you have unexplained symptoms, notify your supervisor and contact COEM.

CONTACTS

Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine (COEM)

La Jolla/Campus: 858-657-1600

Hillcrest: 619-471-9210

UC San Diego Occupational Health Nurse
858-534-8225

Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S)
858-534-3660

Vivarium Safety Officer
858-534-6715



October 2010

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



Occupational Health & Safety Program for Individuals with Research Animal Exposure

What you need to know about exposure to research animals.



Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine (COEM)

Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S)

INTRODUCTION

Many programs at UC San Diego use animals to study the origin and treatment of disease and to better understand biology and life sciences. The majority of animals at UC San Diego are rodents, but we also use guinea pigs, hamsters, pigs, cows, rabbits, fish, frogs, sheep, chickens, birds, cats and dogs.

This brochure contains safety information that will help you protect yourself from hazards associated with exposure to research animals.

WHAT IS THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY PROGRAM (OHSP)

UC San Diego's Occupational Health & Safety Program is administered by the Center for Occupational & Environmental Medicine (COEM) and Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S). It is designed to promote a safe work environment by **minimizing the risk of illness or injury associated with working with or around research animals.**

The program includes initial enrollment and general education for personnel exposed to research animals, health history screening, routine and special immunizations, health surveillance, and wellness promotion.

The OHSP helps protect employee health by assessing each participant's risk factors, providing information, and protective equipment as necessary.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Working with or around research animals and animal wastes can expose workers to health and safety risks. The most common risk is development or worsening of allergies to animals. Another less common risk is the transmission of infection from an animal to a human (zoonosis). Humans are NOT usually susceptible to animal diseases, but there are some exceptions where transmission of an infection from an animal to a human can cause serious illness.

Risk categories assigned are based on whether you have direct or indirect animal contact. If you don't know your

WHO MUST ENROLL AND PARTICIPATE?



All faculty, staff, fellows, students, and affiliates who have **direct contact** with animals, animal waste, or animal tissues or enter the vivaria are required to read UC San Diego's OHSP on Blink at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/safety/research-lab/vivarium/occupational.html>, along with participating and enrolling in the OHSP. Depending on your risk category, the OHSP may require you to undergo additional training or medical surveillance before beginning your duties.

Direct contact means you handle animals, perform procedures on animals, or handle their tissue.

Examples of persons with direct contact include principal investigators, laboratory staff, students doing animal research, and animal care personnel.

MAY VOLUNTARILY ENROLL/PARTICIPATE?

Persons who have no direct contact with research animals and do not enter vivaria but may have incidental or infrequent exposure to research animals at work are encouraged to participate.

Indirect contact means you do not touch animals or animal tissue and do not handle animal waste.

Examples of persons who may have incidental or infrequent exposure include those listed above and facilities personnel, police, security, housekeeping, administrative, and clerical staff who enter lab space where animal work is done.

HOW TO ENROLL AND PARTICIPATE IN OHSP

Complete and submit forms A and B found on the Web at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/safety/research-lab/vivarium/occupational.html>



Your health information and responses will be reviewed by the EH&S Occupational Health Nurse to identify any medical recommendations and you will be counseled about required training, available precautions, and any applicable work restrictions that apply to your work.

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO RESEARCH ANIMALS

Practice these general precautions to reduce the risks of infection and injury when working with or around research animals:

- General cleanliness and hand washing after working with animals or animal wastes is essential.
- Do not eat, chew gum or tobacco, drink, store food, apply cosmetics, or smoke in any laboratory or animal facility.
- Use extra care when using needles or sharp objects, discarding them directly into a "sharps" container without recapping.

People handling animals should always protect themselves by doing the following:

- Wear gloves, a lab coat or disposable gown, safety glasses, and, when required, head cover/bonnet and shoe covers.
- Know how to properly handle the species you work with.
- Properly restrain animals when doing injections.
- Never re-cap needles
- Observe and obey all room signage.
- First wash any animal bite or scratch with disinfectant soap, and then notify your supervisor.
- Seek proper medical attention following any injury or accident.



Take additional precautions for work with hazardous materials:

- Observe EH&S-approved safety plans.
- Familiarize yourself with material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals you use.
- Use biosafety cabinets when working with animals.
- Use fume hoods when you handle a gas or toxic material.
- Place biologically contaminated material in red biohazard bags for autoclaving or incineration.
- Decontaminate non-disposal materials prior to washing or reuse.