Occupational Health & Safety Information for Animal Facility Guests

PLEASE NOTE
❖ If you have been in contact or exposed to rodents or rabbits within the past 72 hours, please disclose this to the Animal Resource Center (ARC) Manager who will assess and determine whether access to the animal facility is appropriate.
❖ All animal facility visitors must wear a lab coat upon entering the facility. The ARC manager may determine that additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is necessary (e.g., you work in another animal facility or you are exposed to other animals on a regular basis). All PPE, including lab coats, gloves, shoe covers, masks, etc. are available in Schroeder Complex Room 561 (ARC Main Office).
❖ Animal facility guests are not allowed to touch or handle animals.

Diseases communicable from animals to humans – Zoonoses
Humans may be susceptible to infectious diseases suffered by animals. Infectious diseases transmitted from animals to humans are called zoonotic diseases. In many cases the animals show little, if any sign of illness. A bacterium from the normal flora of a healthy animal may cause a serious disorder in a person exposed to it. While the animals may have “resistance” to these microorganisms, humans with no previous exposure to the agent may lack this protection. Therefore, one should always be aware of the possible consequences of working with animals and take appropriate precautions to minimize the risk of infection. In the event that you do become ill, it is important that you inform your primary care physician that you work with or have been exposed to animals. Some common sense steps can be taken to decrease the risk of infection. These include cleanliness such as hand washing. You can protect yourself against accidental self-inoculation of a zoonotic disease by wearing gloves, respirators, or other personal safety gear.

Be aware that laboratory animals (particularly rats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and hamsters) are sources of potent allergens to sensitized persons. Repeated exposure may lead to a more serious problem such as occupational asthma.

Exposure to rodents (e.g. guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, and/or rats) or rabbits
Contact with rodents or rodent tissue requires precautions against diseases such as toxoplasmosis, tapeworm infection, and lymphocytic choriomeningitis (LCM). When exposed to rodents or rabbits, be especially aware of the potential for allergic reactions. Precautions should be taken if handling these animals, or their waste and bedding materials.

Hazardous agents
Methods exist for monitoring exposure to potentially hazardous biological, chemical, and physical agents. Protective devices should be used, and other safety practices consistent with safety guidelines should be adopted. Potentially hazardous chemicals in the animal laboratory and animal facility include disinfectants, cleaning agents, and pesticides.
To protect yourself against hazardous exposure, wear gloves when handling chemicals, infectious materials, and animals, and wash your hands after use. Infectious materials must be handled in a fume hood. All work surfaces should be decontaminated daily. All contaminated materials should be decontaminated (by autoclaving or chemical disinfection) before washing, reuse or disposal.

**Pregnancy risks**

If you are pregnant or may be pregnant, avoid hazardous agents including radioactive material. Inhalation of toxic chemicals and certain anesthetic vapors should be avoided especially during the first trimester of pregnancy.

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I HAVE REVIEWED THE ABOVE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION, HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO ANIMALS, AND AM PREPARED TO TOUR THE ANIMAL FACILITY AS A GUEST.

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Tour Participant Name (print)

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Tour Participant Signature            Date

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Name of Person Giving Tour (print)

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Signature of Person Giving Tour            Date