

Petting Zoo and Farm Visits

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Trips to petting zoos and farms are a great way for children to learn about animals while having fun.

However, teachers and parents must realize that animals can carry a variety of diseases that can make people (especially children) sick.

Before visiting the zoo or farm, talk with children about the necessary safety measures. This will help reduce the risk of contracting diseases that animals can sometimes carry such as E. coli and Salmonella.

Before Your Visit

- Ensure children are wearing proper clothing and shoes. No sandals or bare feet.
- Ensure existing cuts or scrapes are cleaned and bandaged.

During and After the Visit

- Do not kiss the animals.
- Wash hands well with soap and water after touching the animals and before eating.
- Do not eat or chew gum around the animals. Eat only in designated areas.
- Do not eat food that has fallen on the ground.
- Do not drink untreated milk or juice.
- Do not put hands, pens, pencils, crayons or other things in your mouth.
- Do not taste animal foods.
- Clean or change footwear before leaving. Wash hands again.
- Treat any animal bites, scrapes or injuries quickly. Notify Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health of all animal-related injuries.

If a member of your group or family shows signs of illness (i.e. stomach cramps, vomiting or diarrhea) after a visit, contact your doctor. In addition, please notify Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health.

Source: Fraser Health Authority and Environmental Health Services, Edmonton.

