Reptiles, Fish, and Amphibians

TETANUS
Tetanus (lockjaw) is an acute, often fatal disease caused by the toxin of the tetanus bacillus, *Clostridium tetani*. The bacterium usually enters the body in the spore form, often through a puncture wound contaminated with soil, dust, or animal feces, or through lacerations, burns, and minor unnoticed wounds. The organism is commonly found in the intestines of animals where it causes no negative effects. Humans infected through a wound or lesion frequently develop muscle rigidity and painful muscular contractions. Infection may be fatal.

All employees working with animals should be immunized against tetanus at least every ten years. All animal bite or scratch wounds should be thoroughly cleansed and evaluated by a physician.

Information regarding the recommended treatment of animal bites that occur at the University of Michigan is available at: http://www.oseh.umich.edu/pdf/BiteScratchProtocol.pdf

Additional information regarding tetanus can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/nip/diseases/tetanus/default.htm

SALMONELLOSIS
Many species are susceptible to infection with bacteria within the genus *Salmonella* including guinea pigs, mice, rats, chickens, pigs, sheep, cats, rabbits, reptiles, and nonhuman primates. However, rodents and rabbits raised for use in research are very rarely infected. Infected animals may display no signs of infection or be severely affected with diarrhea, dehydration, or systemic bacterial infection.

In the laboratory environment, *Salmonella* spp may be transmitted to humans when a person ingests infected fecal material such as when a fecally contaminated glove or piece of equipment contacts a human’s mucous membranes. Infected humans may have diarrhea (with or without blood), fever, and stomach cramps. More severe signs and symptoms may develop especially in individuals with compromised immune systems. Onset of signs will usually occur 12-72 hours after infection and last for 4-7 days. In humans, infection is diagnosed through laboratory testing of a stool sample or vomitus. The practice of good personal hygiene, such as hand washing after handling animals and their environment, the use of personal protective equipment, and effective environmental sanitation are most important in preventing disease transmission to personnel. Although the disease may be treated with antimicrobials, infected individuals most frequently are provided supportive care (i.e. electrolyte replacement, intravenous fluids) until they recover.
Additional information regarding Salmonellosis can be found at: [http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/](http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/)

If you have had an exposure, illness symptoms, and need medical attention please refer to the information in the [Bite Scratch Protocol](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/animals/reptiles.htm).

Contact the UCUCA Office at 763-8028

References:


[University of California Santa Barbara Office of Research](http://research.ucsb.edu/iacuc/zoonotic.shtml).  1996. Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee: Zoonotic Diseases,

[CDC Fish](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/animals/aquarium.htm)  
[CDC Reptiles](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/animals/reptiles.htm)