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.

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

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RABIES
Bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, and coyotes are the mammals most often infected with rabies. Rabies postexposure prophylaxis is recommended for all persons with bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposures to such wildlife. Postexposure prophylaxis should be initiated as soon as possible after personnel are exposed. Postexposure prophylaxis might be appropriate even if a bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposure is not apparent when there is reasonable probability that such exposure might have occurred. Preexposure vaccination should be considered for persons whose activities bring them into frequent contact with potentially rabid bats, raccoons, skunks, or other species at risk for having rabies. These animals should never be handled by untrained and unvaccinated personnel.

Rabies is transmitted only when the virus is introduced into bite wounds or open cuts in skin or onto mucous membranes. Immediate and thorough washing of all bite wounds and scratches with soap and water and a virucidal agent such as povidone-iodone solution irrigation are important measures for preventing rabies.

Small rodents and lagomorphs (e.g., rabbits and hares) are almost never found to be infected with rabies and have not been known to transmit rabies to humans.

If a person is bitten by an animal with unknown vaccination status, the person should immediately clean the wound and seek medical attention.
Additional information regarding rabies can be found at:
http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_rabies.htm

If you have had an exposure, illness symptoms, and need medical attention please refer to the information in the Bite Scratch Protocol.

Contact the UCUCA Office at 763-8028

References:


