



**WE'RE HERE
TO HELP..**

CALIFORNIA

For after hours or weekend assistance, call our nursing hotline at **1.800.797.1717**.

FLORIDA

If you have any questions, please call your Nurse Care Manager at **1.800.832.0778**.

HIV & PETS



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Question and Answer

Q: Can I have a pet if I'm HIV-positive?

A: Yes, you can have HIV and still have a pet. Don't give up your pet just because you're HIV-positive. Pets can be rewarding by keeping you calm and improving your well being. By following simple infection protection steps, you and your pet will live a long and healthy life together.

Q: Can I spread HIV to my pets?

A: No, HIV can't be spread to cats, dogs, birds, or other pets. They can't give it to you.

Q: I work with animals for a living. Should I quit?

A: By having a job that involves direct contact with animals you are putting yourself at a higher risk for infection. Talk to your healthcare provider on whether or not your job is unsafe to your health.

Q: I'm visiting friends with pets. Is this a risk for me?

A: Yes, just apply the same safety measures as in your own home.

Q: Can I get an infection from my pet?

A: Although the risks are low, you can get an infection from pets or other animals. (see table)

Disease	Type of Organism	Transmission	Illness
Bartonellosis	Bacteria	Cat Scratch	Skin Lesions
Campylobacter	Bacteria	Animal Stool	Diarrhea, Blood Infection
Cryptosporidiosis	Parasite	Animal Stool	Diarrhea
Mycobacteriosis	Bacteria	Aquarium Water	Skin Lesions
Pasteurella	Bacteria	Cat Bite	Serious Skin Infection
Salmonellosis	Bacteria	Animal Stool	Diarrhea, Blood Infection
Toxoplasmosis	Parasite	Cat Stool	Brain Infection

Infection Protection (Do's and Don'ts)

- Do** wash your hands with soap and water after playing with animals, especially before eating or handling food.
- Do** feed your pet commercial food only.
- Do** wear gloves when you clean an aquarium.
- Do** keep your pet's nails short.
- Do** report any animal scratches or bites to your provider quickly.
- Don't** touch the stool of any animal.
- Don't** kiss your pet or let it lick your mouth.
- Don't** let pets drink water out of your glass or the toilet bowl.
- Don't** handle animals that have diarrhea.
- Don't** get a pet that is younger than 6 months old.
- Don't** touch stray animals.

SAFETY MEASURES

Cats: Before you adopt or buy a cat make sure that it's at least one year old. Older cats are less likely to carry infections. It is best that you have someone who is not HIV-positive or pregnant clean the litter box. If you have to clean it, do it daily and **always** wear gloves. Don't forget to wash your hands right away after with soap and water. Keep your cat indoors. This will keep it from hunting.

Other pets: Avoid keeping and touching these animals:

- Lizards
- Ferrets
- Turtles
- Raccoons
- Snakes
- Bats
- Monkeys
- Iguanas

Reptiles and exotic animals are high carriers of Salmonella, which causes diarrhea and blood infection. If you do touch one, wash your hands with soap and water right away.

