

Zoonotics

Diseases which can be transmitted between humans and dogs

To protect both humans and dogs, please be aware of these diseases which can be passed between them, many transmitted through contact with fecal matter. For more information about these diseases, please visit the Center for Disease Control's website: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/animals/dogs.htm>

Broken Skin Pathogens

MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) – *skin-to-skin transmission, infecting any open wounds* – MRSA is the bane of modern hospitals. It is the #1 infection passed via the hands of healthcare workers and/or visitors. Dogs can both carry MRSA from patient to patient, and/or can become infected in any open sores.

Yeast – *skin-to-skin transmission* – Certain strains of yeast are capable of infecting open wounds, mucous membranes, and irritated skin.

Intestinal Parasites

Roundworms (Toxocara, Visceral larval migrans) - *fecal transmission* - Dogs can get this by eating grass or mouthing toys, rocks, etc. in infected areas.

Hookworms (Cutaneous larval migrans) - *fecal transmission* - Dogs may get these worms by simply walking through an infected area - larva can burrow into dog footpads.

Tapeworm (Dipylidium Caninum, Echinococcus Granulosus) - *fecal transmission* - This worm primarily carried by fleas. As a precaution, your dog should be wormed after a flea infestation.

Giardaria - *fecal transmission* – This is a protozoan that contaminates water. It causes moderate to severe diarrhea in both dogs and humans. Giardia is the most common water contaminate in the US.

Cryptosporidium - *fecal transmission* – This is another parasite that is found in contaminated water. It also causes diarrhea and fever.

Bacterial Infections

“C. Diff” (Clostridium difficile) - *fecal transmission* – This bacteria is all-too-common and is frequently transmitted from patient-to-patient in long-term care facilities. It has been recently shown also to infect dogs. In both humans and dogs, C.Diff. causes diarrhea and fever.

Camphlobacteriosis and Salmonellosis (Salmonella) - *fecal transmission* – These bacteria are acquired by ingesting contaminated food or contaminated fecal matter.

Leptospirosis - *primarily urine transmission, but may be transmitted by any body fluid except saliva* - Outbreaks of this bacterium are on the rise in certain parts of the US, particularly in the South! It is transmitted by other animals' urine, especially hooved stock and rodents. Vaccination is available through your vet.

Brucellosis (Brucella Canis) – *urine transmission* - This bacteria is primarily sexually transmitted, but can be transferred by contact with contaminated urine.

Q Fever (Coxiella burnetii) – *body fluid and fecal transmission* – Humans are highly susceptible to this rare bacteria.

Yersiniosis (Yersinia enterocolitica) - *fecal transmission* – These bacteria are acquired by ingesting contaminated food or contaminated fecal matter.

External Parasites/Diseases Carried by Ectoparasites

Ehrlichia – *tick borne bacteria transmitted by blood/blood contact* – Infected dogs will be feverish, lethargic, and have very pale mucous membranes.

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever - *tick borne bacteria transmitted by blood/blood contact* – Infected dogs will be feverish, disoriented, and show joint pain similar to arthritis.

Lyme Disease - *tick borne bacteria transmitted by blood/blood contact* - Symptoms include swollen joints, difficulty in moving, and fever.

Plague (Yersinia Pestis) – *bacteria carried by fleas* – Dogs will be feverish and lethargic. Plague is carried by fleas, but may also be acquired directly from an infected rodent.

Mange (Scabies) – *skin-to-skin contact* - This is a microscopic insect that infects the dog's skin, resulting in hair loss. It can easily be transferred to humans by direct contact. NOTE - dogs also can develop a skin outbreak by a related parasite called demodectic mange that is not contagious! Demodectic mange is to dogs as dust mites are to humans - always present but only cause skin infections in very young, very old, or immune-compromised animals.

Fungal (Mycotic) Diseases

Ringworm (Dermatomycosis) – *transmission by skin-to-skin contact* - This is a skin infection that looks like concentric circles or worm under the skin, but is actually a fungus. It can be highly contagious to both dogs and humans!

Viruses

Rabies - Vaccine is available through a veterinarian.

SPECIAL NOTE:

In many facilities, the staff is no longer using “CONTACT PRECAUTIONS” or “ISOLATION” signs because they are concerned about the patients’ privacy. If there is a sign on the door, it might read “All Visitors Must Check in at the Nurse’s Station.” There may be no obvious sign but will be gowns and gloves next to the door. Please always check with a nurse or supervisor before entering a room with a sign and/or protective equipment. This is to protect you, your dog, and the next patient/resident that your dog visits.