Hand Washing and Hygiene
Hand washing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of disease. Warm water and soap should be used for a minimum of 20 seconds (sing 'Happy Birthday' twice). Antimicrobial hand gels can be effective when hands are not visibly dirty.

- Wash your hands often!!
  - BEFORE—preparing food; eating; any contact with infants or young children
  - AFTER—contact with pets or other animals; cleaning up pet waste or cages; using the restroom; blowing your nose; changing infant diapers
- Supervise children to ensure proper hand washing
- Avoid direct contact with animal feces
  - Wear gloves when gardening, cleaning up animal waste or changing litter boxes
  - Cover outdoor sandboxes when not in use
  - Keep litter boxes away from kitchen and eating areas
- Clean and disinfect areas accessed by pets
  - Change cat litter boxes daily; disinfect once a month
  - Remove pet waste in the yard, in cages or kennels weekly
  - Clean bird cage linings daily
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning animal cages or cleaning aquariums —Wash hands after finished

Children and Animals
Children, especially those 5 years old and younger, should always be supervised while interacting with animals.

- Do NOT let children:
  - Put their hands or other objects (e.g., pacifiers) into their mouths when they are around animals or animal areas
  - Play roughly with pets — to avoid bites and scratches
  - Kiss pets or allow pets to lick the children’s face

Pet Health
- Keeping pets healthy can minimize zoonotic diseases
  - Have your pet checked by a veterinarian twice a year
  - Keep vaccinations current, especially rabies
  - Use veterinarian recommended tick and flea prevention
  - Pets with diarrhea should be examined by a veterinarian
- Do not allow your animal to eat other animal’s feces
- Do not feed raw or under cooked meats to your pet—feed pets a high-quality commercial pet food

Personal Protection While Outdoors
- Wildlife can be infected with zoonotic diseases
  - Avoid contact with wild animals or waterfowl or their feces
  - Bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes can be infected with rabies—If bitten, contact a physician immediately
  - Do not allow pets to interact with wildlife
- Avoid insect vectors (e.g., ticks and mosquitoes)
  - Avoid wooded areas or peak vector activity times (e.g., dusk and dawn for mosquitoes)
  - Wear light-colored clothing and long sleeve shirts and long pants if visiting wooded areas
  - Use EPA-approved insect repellents (e.g., DEET or picaridin)
    — NOTE: DEET should not be used on pets
- Use vector control measures around your home
  - Remove stagnant water sources to minimize mosquito breeding areas

Food Safety
- Handle and prepare foods safely
  - Do not eat raw or under cooked meat or eggs
  - Cook foods, especially meats, thoroughly until the internal temperature reaches 165°F
  - Wash raw fruits and vegetables before eating
  - Avoid raw milk or unpasteurized dairy products
  - Avoid cross contamination in the kitchen
    -- Use separate cutting boards for meat items and fruits and vegetables
  - Store food promptly at the proper temperature
- Promptly wash any kitchen utensils, or surfaces that have been in contact with raw meat or eggs

For More Information
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Healthy Pets Healthy People
www.cdc.gov/healthypets/

Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)
Safe Pet Guidelines
www.pawssf.org/graphics/education/safe_pet_guidelines.pdf

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