Pets are an important part of the family, but some diseases of animals can cause illness in people. Keep yourself, your family, and your pets healthy by remembering W.A.S.H.

**WASH**
- Keep germs out of your eyes, nose, and mouth
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water
    - AFTER contact with pets, pet food and treats, toys or bedding
    - AFTER cleaning up poop or cleaning cages
    - BEFORE contact with infants or young children
    - BEFORE eating food

**AVOID**
- Avoid disease vectors
  - Mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas can transfer diseases from animals to people.
  - Avoid vector areas (tall grass, wooded areas) and peak activity times (dusk and dawn)

**SAFETY**
- Avoid wild animals
  - Wild animals can transfer diseases to your pet and to you

**HEALTH**
- Use personal protection
  - Wear gloves when cleaning items in animal areas, especially poop
  - Use insect repellents and wear long sleeves and long pants when outdoors or in wooded areas

**Wound care**
- Clean any wounds from animals promptly
- Do not let animals lick or contaminate any wounds
- Cover wounds before contact with animals

**FOR PEOPLE**
- **WASH**
  - Keep germs out of your eyes, nose, and mouth
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water
- **AVOID**
  - Avoid disease vectors
    - Mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas can transfer diseases from animals to people.
    - Avoid vector areas (tall grass, wooded areas) and peak activity times (dusk and dawn)
  - Avoid wild animals
    - Wild animals can transfer diseases to your pet and to you
- **SAFETY**
  - Use personal protection
    - Wear gloves when cleaning items in animal areas, especially poop
    - Use insect repellents and wear long sleeves and long pants when outdoors or in wooded areas
- **HEALTH**
  - Wound care
    - Clean any wounds from animals promptly
    - Do not let animals lick or contaminate any wounds
    - Cover wounds before contact with animals

**FOR PETS**
- **Clean pet areas regularly**
  - Clean litter boxes daily
  - Pick up pet waste in the yard weekly
  - Clean and disinfect pet cages at least weekly
  - Clean the lining of bird cages daily
- **Avoid disease vectors**
  - Have your pet checked by your veterinarian for external parasites (e.g., ticks, fleas)
- **Avoid wild animals**
  - Keep pets away from wild animals
- **Protect your pets from disease**
  - Talk with your veterinarian about flea and tick prevention products for your pet
  - Keep your pet’s vaccinations current
- **Keep pets healthy**
  - Have your pet checked each year by your veterinarian
  - Do not feed pets raw meat diets; feed a well-balanced commercial diet

For more information, talk with your veterinarian and visit www.cfsph.iastate.edu/zoonoses