



UNIVERSITY of  
ROCHESTER



# Animal Resource Occupational Health & Safety

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## WORKPLACE HAZARDS and RISKS

Identification

Awareness

Risk Assessment

Risk Management



## The Animal Resource is a healthy workplace for all staff.

Unique Risks : Allergens  
Ergonomics  
Zoonoses  
Bites-scratches  
Cage wash entrapment  
Sharps  
Experimental Hazards – Biological  
Chemical  
Radioactive

Seek medical guidance:

Reproduction/Pregnancy  
Immune Status



Unique Risks : Allergens - Animal dander, urine proteins & bedding dust

Awareness: All staff contacting all animals are at risk.

Clinical signs: red-itchy eyes, sneezing, wheezing, rash and difficulty breathing may progress to asthma

Risk Assessment : Pre-existing allergies discussed with UHS at hire & at least annually.

Highest risk: Cage preparation and dumping  
Aerosols - Vacuuming fur, Power washing

Risk Management :  
Downdraft Cage Dumping Stations  
HEPA filtered vacuum exhaust  
PPE recommended by UHS



Unique Risks : Ergonomics

Awareness: All staff lifting, bending, twisting or with repetitive motion tasks

Risk Assessment : Pre-existing injuries discussed with UHS at hire & at least annually.  
Highest risk: Mouse cage changing, cage & waste movement to & from cage wash & dumpsters, cage manipulation in cagewash, lifting animals or bags of bedding, feed & garbage.  
Deskwork using PC.

Risk Management : Workplace assessment, following recommendations and training by Environmental Health & Safety (EHS).



Unique Risks : Zoonoses – Salmonella & Campylobacter

Awareness: Asymptomatic in nonhuman primates & reptiles. Clinical signs in people include abdominal pain, fever and diarrhea.

Risk Assessment : Highest risk when working with nonhuman primates & reptiles and their soiled caging or substrates.

Risk Management : **Keep feces out of your mouth.**

Wear gloves when handling nonhuman primates or any surfaces they contact. Do not take workplace shoes or clothes home. Sanitize all surfaces containing nonhuman primates and reptiles. Both bacteria may survive on clean appearing surfaces.



Unique Risks : Zoonoses – Herpes B- Cercopithecine herpesvirus

Awareness: Asymptomatic in all **macaques** shed in saliva, ocular and reproductive tract secretions. May see NHP lip blisters & red eyes.

Risk Assessment : Highest risk when bitten or scratched working with or near macaques. One human case of eye splash with reproductive tracts secretion - urine. One case with spouse sharing ointment treating a bite wound. Can be fatal in humans.

Risk Management : Wear PPE when near alive or dead macaques (eye & mouth protection, gown, gloves, long pants...). No petting. Be aware of kit locations for Emergency Treatment of Bites, Scratches, Eye Splash and theoretical exposures such as needle stick or scrape by a soiled cage surface. **IMMEDIATELY** begin self treatment as you seek further help including visit to UHS or Emergency Dept.



Unique Risks : Cage Rack Washer Entrapment

Awareness: After one cage wash worker died at another U.S. institution due to entrapment, signage, training and cage washer changes are required.

Risk Assessment : Highest risk when entering, exiting, cleaning, servicing, loading or unloading a walk-in rack washer.

Risk Management : Initial and annual training on rack washer safety. Always look inside rack washer before turning on. Know how to force rack washer doors open with your body. Know how to de-energize rack washer by pulling emergency cords.



Unique Risks : Sharps- Needles, Scalpels, Broken Glass...

Awareness: Hypodermic needles and scalpels may be present in surgical & procedural areas. Broken glass may be present in animal rooms using water bottles.

Risk Assessment : Highest risk when working in surgical and procedural areas and their garbage bags or carcass bags or red bags or full sharps containers

Risk Management : Hypodermic needles must not be recapped (unless justified and using the one-handed technique). Needles and scalpel blades must be placed in EHS approved red sharps containers. Broken glass must be placed EHS approved containers.

Unique Risks : Experiment related Biological, Chemical & Radiation Hazards

Awareness: EHS reviews use of all research protocols dosing or exposing laboratory animals to hazards posing risk to employees.

Risk Assessment : Risk present when with working animals, their caging & waste in rooms with the **REQUIRED** Hazard Signage on doors and cage cards (BSL 1 or 2, chemical or radioactive hazards). Potential risk with all animals if a researcher does not follow the rules.

Risk Management : Door signage clearly identifies experimental hazards and PPE required to enter the room. Written “Hazard Use” instructions composed by EHS describe what practices are required by Animal Resource Staff when handling hazard-dosed animals and their cages and soiled bedding. Each cage card housing a hazard clearly indicates the hazard that correlates with written instructions and safeguards in the Hazard Log Binder in the animal housing room or procedural area.



Unique Risks : Animal bites or scratches.

Awareness: Any animal may bite, scratch and some may kick.

Risk Assessment : Highest risk when handling or near animals.

Risk Management : Staff trained on species-specific handling techniques. If bitten or scratched or injured by an animal, go to UHS after informing the Animal Resource Office staff (phone or in person) who will notify your supervisor. If injury involves a macaque, follow the Monkey Bite/Scratch Protocol.

THANK YOU

..... for helping us all work together promoting  
a safe and healthy Animal Resource.