

Animal Allergies

WHY IS ANIMAL ALLERGY AWARENESS IMPORTANT?

- When working with animals it is important to be aware of the risk of developing allergies from the animals you work with. Animal-related allergies are one of the most significant health hazards faced by laboratory animal workers. (1)
- About 10 to 46 percent of exposed personnel develop laboratory animal allergies, with symptoms progressing from those of minor rhinitis to more severe signs of asthma. (1)(2)
- Inhalation is one of the most common ways for allergens to enter the body. After a period of time, you may inhale enough quantities of allergens to become sensitized, and can develop symptoms even to small amounts of the allergen. (1)
- More serious reactions to inhaled allergens may result in asthma symptoms such as cough, chest tightness, wheezing, or shortness of breath. (3)

HOW TO MINIMIZE RISK OF EXPOSURE

The following are actions that you can take to decrease your exposure:

- Understand the sources of allergens, your individual risk, ways you can be exposed through your work and ways to control your exposure. (1)
- Wash your hands frequently. Avoid touching your hands to your face.
- Wear protective equipment such as N95 respirator, hair and shoe covers, gloves, & long sleeved gowns when cleaning cages or handling animal byproducts such as dander, serum and urine. (1)
- Avoiding skin contact with animal products may decrease your risk of sensitization.(1)(3)
- Engineering controls are the most effective type of workplace controls to minimize exposure to allergens. This may include: Biological safety cabinets, chemical fume hoods, cages with filter tops, cage racks, clean changing stations and other engineering controls. (1)



If You Develop Any Allergy Symptoms Please contact EH&S Right Away!



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