What are the risks?

Animal exhibits, petting zoos and farm tours are fun ways to learn about animals and agriculture. However, even healthy animals can carry harmful germs that can make people sick. The risk of getting sick is higher for young children, elderly, older people, pregnant women and persons with weakened immune systems. Keep in mind people can also make animals sick.

What you can do?

- Wash your hands before and after going to the animal area or touching animals
- Prepare food, eat or drink outside the animal area AFTER washing hands
- Wash hands after going to the bathroom, taking off dirty clothes or shoes
- Keep strollers, sipper cups, pacifiers, or toys outside the animal area
- Children younger than 5 years old need adult supervision in the animal and when washing hands.
- Keep children’s hand or objects out of their mouth in the animal area
- Do not share your food with animals

References:
Staying Healthy at Animal Exhibits This Summer, http://www.cdc.gov/Features/AnimalExhibits/index.html
Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings 2011, http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6004a1.htm
Your hands may look clean... but they’re NOT! Wash your hands!

Germs on our hands can make you sick. Germs are tiny so you can’t see them, but they are everywhere. So, wash your hands often and well.

Soap and water is best!

- Wet hands with clean water
- Apply soap
- Scrub hands for 20 seconds, including backs of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails
- Rinse hands
- Dry with clean paper towel or air dry. Do not dry on clothing.

No soap and water? Use a hand sanitizer!

- Apply sanitizer to wet your hands completely.
- Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces, until your hands are dry.

If hand are soiled...

- Apply double the amount of sanitizer.
- Scrub your hands for 20 seconds as if washing with soap and water.
- While hands are still wet, use a clean paper towel to dry hands.
- Reapply normal dose of sanitizer and rub until dry.