

**WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN  
INJURY OR ILLNESS**

*In the event of a serious emergency, seek immediate medical attention (on campus, dial 8-8911) and follow up with the Occupational Health Nurse within 24 hours.* If a work related injury/exposure does not require emergency care, you may see the Occupational Health Nurse or a doctor of your choice. In either event, tell the health care provider if your work involves laboratory animals.

Personnel are responsible to report immediately any work-related injury, illness or symptom. This includes rodent bites, needle sticks, trips/slips/falls, allergic reactions, or any other health problems related to the work environment. Failure to report work-related symptoms may disqualify an employee from worker's compensation benefits. Furthermore, withholding information about work-related symptoms may unnecessarily put others at risk of a correctable procedural or environmental hazard.

**>> Injury**

If you are injured on the job, immediately notify a supervisor, who will file a First Report of Injury form. Then, if medical attention is required, contact either the Occupational Health Nurse at 214-648-9163, or you may elect to see a doctor of your choice. The Occupational Health Nurse can quickly assist you and/or refer you to a UT Southwestern medical specialist. After hours and on weekends, the nurse can be paged at 214-344-9854.

**>> Illness**

If you should experience allergy-like reactions (rash, wheezing, shortness of breath, sneezing/runny nose, etc.) that you believe are related to your work, or if you become ill with unexplained symptoms, please contact the Occupational Health Nurse at 214-648-9163 for an evaluation. The nurse can assess your symptoms and may refer you for further evaluation by a UT Southwestern specialist or you may elect to see a physician of your choice.

**ATTENTION**

**People working with human blood/tissues, hazardous chemicals, or biological agents** must attend the EH&S Hazard Communication Training class. Register for the next class on-line using OAS.

**People working with radiation or radioactivity-producing materials** must attend the EH&S Radiation Safety Training class. Register for the next class on-line using OAS.

**People who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant and people with compromised immune systems** may be at increased risk. Please consult the Occupational Health Nurse right away for a private consultation.

**HOW DO I ENROLL IN THE  
WORKER PROTECTION PROGRAM?**

To enroll, simply complete and submit the **Health History Questionnaire**, which can be completed on-line at [www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection](http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection) or on paper. Your health information will be reviewed by the Occupational Health Nurse, who will screen your responses to identify any risks you need to be aware of and to advise you about required training, available precautions, and work restrictions (if applicable). The questionnaire needs to be completed at least annually. A reminder will be sent by email to each participant when it is time to update. Failure to enroll or update your questionnaire can result in withholding/revocation of IACUC approval or ARC badge access.

**WORKER PROTECTION PROGRAM CONTACTS**  
**Worker Protection Main Number:** 214-648-9163

**Occupational Health Nurse Manager:** 214-645-5300  
Tam Johnson, RN, BSN, COHN-S

**Medical Director:** 214-648-9163  
Craig Glazer, M.D., M.S.P.H.

Detach reference card here

**IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Campus Emergency Dispatch . . . . . 214-648-8911  
IACUC Office . . . . . 214-648-5550  
Animal Resources Center . . . . . 214-648-4100  
Environmental Health and Safety . . . . . 214-648-2250  
Human Resources-Worker's Comp. . . . . 214-648-9824  
Worker Protection Program Office . . . . . 214-648-9163  
[www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection](http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection)



**ANIMAL CARE AND USE  
WORKER PROTECTION PROGRAM**



**Worker Protection:**

WHAT EVERY UT SOUTHWESTERN EMPLOYEE

NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT EXPOSURE

TO RESEARCH ANIMALS

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL  
HEALTH  
ST. PAUL BUILDING  
FIRST FLOOR

Phone: 214-648-9163 Fax: 214-645-5196  
Email: [workerprotection@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:workerprotection@utsouthwestern.edu)  
[www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection](http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/workerprotection)

## INTRODUCTION

Many programs at UT Southwestern use animals to study the origin and treatment of disease and to better understand biology and life sciences. Although most research animals at UT Southwestern are rodents, we also use frogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs and sheep. This brochure contains safety information to help protect you from hazards associated with exposure to research animals.

## WHAT IS THE WORKER PROTECTION PROGRAM (WPP)?

The Worker Protection Program (WPP) is designed to promote a safe work environment by minimizing the risk of illness or injury associated with working with or around research animals. The program includes initial registration and general education of all animal-exposed personnel, health history screening, routine and special immunizations, medical care, workforce health surveillance, and wellness promotion.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Working with or around research animals and animal wastes can expose workers to health and safety risks. The most common risk of working with or around research animals is development of or worsening of allergies. In addition, although humans usually are not susceptible to animal diseases, there are some important exceptions where transmission of an infection from an animal to a human can cause serious illness. The WPP helps employees stay healthy by assessing each person's risk factors and by providing information and, when necessary, protective equipment to safeguard our employees.

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

All faculty, staff, fellows and students whose duties involve exposure to animals, animal waste, or animal tissues are included in this program and are expected to participate in all associated data collection, training, and prevention activities offered to make the workplace safer. This includes personnel in non-research units, such as physical plant and campus police who, by virtue of their need to access all facilities on campus, may find themselves exposed to research animals.

## RISK CATEGORIES BASED ON ANIMAL CONTACT

The Worker Protection Program has assigned four risk categories to animal-related hazards based on the amount of animal contact a job requires. Depending on your job's risk category, the WPP may require you to undergo additional training before you undertake your duties. If you do not already know your job's risk category, please consult your supervisor.

### >> Risk Category 0:

**Virtually no direct or indirect contact** with research animals is anticipated.

- Examples: Managers, Administrators, and clerical staff.
- Required to read this brochure.

### >> Risk Category 1:

**No direct contact** with research animals, animal tissues or animal wastes. Any exposure to animals at work would be incidental and infrequent.

- Examples: Physical Plant, Police and Security, Housekeeping personnel.
- Required to read this brochure and enroll in the Worker Protection Program by completing the Health History Questionnaire.

### >> Risk Category 2:

**Regular indirect exposure** to animals at work due to duty station (working in an area where animals are commonly used). No direct contact with research animals, animal tissues or animal wastes.

- Examples: Lab personnel, equipment maintenance staff in animal use areas.
- Required to read this brochure, enroll in the Worker Protection Program by completing the Health History Questionnaire, and complete the On-Line Tutorial on Animal-Related Hazards. Vaccinations may be advised.

### >> Risk Category 3:

**Frequent direct contact** with research animals, animal tissues or animal wastes.

- Examples: ARC staff, PI-maintained animal care staff, animal researchers.
- Required to read this brochure, enroll in the Worker Protection Program by completing the Health History Questionnaire, complete the expanded On-Line Tutorial on Animal-Related Hazards, and may also be required to attend a species-specific animal handling class. Vaccinations may be advised.

## GENERAL PRECAUTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES EXPOSED TO RESEARCH ANIMALS

There are steps that you can take to reduce the risks of infection and injury when working with or around research animals. General cleanliness and hand washing after working with animals or animal wastes is essential. Do not eat, chew gum or tobacco, drink, store food, apply cosmetics or smoke in any laboratory or animal facility. Use extra care when using needles or sharp objects, discarding them directly into a "sharps" container without recapping.

### People handling animals should always protect themselves by:

1. wearing gloves, lab coat or disposable gown, headcover/bonnet, mask, and shoe covers,
2. learning how to properly handle the species you are working with,
3. never re-capping needles,
4. observing all room signage,
5. immediately washing any animal bite or scratch with disinfectant soap, and
6. seeking medical attention following an injury.

### People working with hazardous agents should take additional precautions by:

1. observing the EH&S approved safety plan,
2. using a biological safety cabinet when handling infectious materials,
3. using a fume hood when handling toxic materials,
4. decontaminating (by autoclaving or chemical disinfection) non-disposable materials before washing or reuse,
5. placing biologically contaminated materials in biohazard bag for incineration or autoclave, and familiarizing yourself with the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for chemicals you use,
6. If using radioactive materials, following the requirements of the Principal Investigator's radioactive material sublicense and UT Southwestern's Radiation Safety Manual.