

Visiting Agricultural Fairs, Zoos, Petting Zoos and Farms



Visits to farms, agricultural fairs and petting zoos provide an enjoyable experience and play a valuable role in educating children about animals.

Unfortunately, many children become sick each year because of a visit to an animal exhibit. It is important to remember that animals may carry germs that can be harmful to people. Here are some tips to ensure children do not become ill from visiting animal exhibits.

Preparation for the visit

- ▶ Bring handwipes and hand sanitizer for cleaning hands, Handwashing facilities may not be readily available.
- ▶ Discuss safety precautions with children prior to the visit.
- ▶ Discuss with children the importance of handwashing after handling or touching the animals and before eating.

Precautions while visiting

- ▶ Ensure children are supervised while in the animal area.
- ▶ If the children are eating snacks or lunch, ensure it is in a designated eating area where animals are excluded. Be sure children wash their hands prior to eating.
- ▶ Do not drink unpasteurized milk or unpasteurized apple cider.
- ▶ Do not eat the animal food.
- ▶ Do not kiss the animals.
- ▶ Ensure that children do not climb on the animal enclosures.
- ▶ Report any sick or aggressive animals to the people in charge. Ensure that a health care provider is consulted regarding any biting incidents.
- ▶ Do not pick up anything from the ground in or around the animal pens.
- ▶ Baby bottles, water bottles, pacifiers and toys should not be brought into the animal areas. Stroller trays should be properly cleaned after leaving the animal area.
- ▶ Discourage hand–mouth activities (fingers, toys, pencils).

Most Important

- ▶ Everyone should wash their hands thoroughly
 - ▶ After touching the animals
 - ▶ After leaving the animal areas
 - ▶ Before eating