

Your new baby ...

Let us help keep your family healthy

Aren't babies wonderful?! They're the embodiment of your hopes and dreams and so full of wonder and curiosity. But the explorations and investigations of young children can bring some unexpected exposures to dangers you may not see. These risks are completely avoidable in most cases.

While you are pregnant:

During pregnancy Toxoplasmosis presents an uncommon but serious risk to your pregnancy. Some simple steps can be taken to eliminate the risk. Be sure meats you eat are properly cooked. Do not choose this time to introduce a kitten into your home. Avoid contact with cat litter boxes if possible. Wash produce before consuming and wash your hands after working in the garden.

Infants, toddlers and pets:

In addition to the concerns you might have about Toxoplasmosis impacting your pregnancy, there are some parasites of animals that can directly impact young children and adults alike. You may already have a pet in your family. You may be considering adding a pet in the future ... after all kids and pets just go together. But even if you choose not to have a puppy or kitten in your home, your baby will almost surely come in contact with dogs and cats.

Animals add so much to life. However, there are some precautions you can take to protect your family and particularly your young children from diseases that can pass from animals to humans, including some of the easiest-to-prevent parasites. Check the list at right for 10 quick steps you can take now.

Learn more:

Start by visiting with your physician. Your obstetrician and pediatrician can help reassure you with some common sense advice on hygiene. If you have pets, take them to your veterinarian regularly and be sure to use parasite control products available from your veterinarian. These products are convenient, safe, effective and affordable. They will keep your pet free of parasites and help protect your family from the risks of human exposure.

For more information about parasites and people go to the Companion Animal Parasite Council Web site at www.petsandparasites.org and always consult with your veterinarian about the best products to use.

10 tips to protect your family

1. Wash your hands well after any exposure to soil (gardening), sandboxes and raw meat.
2. Eat only well-cooked meat.
3. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables to eliminate contamination.
4. Have a spouse, partner or friend change the litter box. If changing the litter is unavoidable, change it daily. Be certain to wash hands well after changing the litter.
5. Supervise infants sitting on the ground or on the floor. Do not allow them to eat dirt or food that has fallen.
6. Pick up dog and cat feces from the yard daily.
7. Cover sandboxes and play areas to prevent wildlife and strays from contaminating these areas.
8. Take your pet to the veterinarian regularly and have your pet tested for parasites at least yearly.
9. Deworm your cat or dog per your veterinarian's recommendations.
10. Administer year-round products to help control Toxocara infections and other products as directed by your veterinarian to control other parasites.

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Visit our Web site at
www.petsandparasites.org

