

Working with Laboratory Animals

The occupational health program for personnel who work in laboratory vertebrate animal facilities or who have frequent contact with vertebrate animals requires that anyone who will handle vertebrate research animals enroll in the medical monitoring program. Information about enrollment may be found at [Medical Monitoring for Vertebrate Animal Users](#).

Animal Allergens pose a significant occupational risk for lab workers as described in [CDC NIOSH literature](#).

Reporting of illnesses or injuries (see [Workers' Compensation-Reporting an Injury](#)): All work-related illnesses or injuries must be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor and within twenty-four hours to EH&S. Report injuries that include, but are not limited to:

- Unprotected exposures, including needle punctures, to infectious agents
- Unprotected exposures to carcinogens and similar high-toxicity materials
- Exposures to radionuclides or any other hazardous material

Maintenance of individual health records: EH&S maintains enrollment records for individuals participating in the Occupational Health Surveillance Program; however all medical records for participants are maintained at the office of the FSU Occupational Health physician, a personal physician, or [University Health Services](#).

Surveillance program for zoonotic diseases: Copies of protocols proposing work with zoonotic diseases must be submitted by the project director to EH&S for review by the Biological Safety Committee and the Biological Safety Officer ACUC and LAR. Personnel are instructed to notify supervisors of illnesses or suspected work-related health problems.

Monitoring of hazardous substances: Copies of protocols proposing work with hazardous chemical or physical agents in animals must be submitted to EH&S. These are reviewed by the Biological Safety Officer or other EH&S personnel. Lab workers are instructed to notify supervisors of illness and suspected work-related health problems.

Employee Occupational Health Education Program: EH&S and LAR provide pre-work training to personnel regarding the following hazards if identified in researcher protocols or related to risks associated with specific job duties:

- Zoonoses and other biohazards,
- Chemical and physical hazards and
- Other occupational hazards, including bites, allergies and, considerations for pregnant women.
- [Anesthetic Gas Safety](#)
- Health policies for animal care personnel

Animal care personnel are required to wear lab coats, scrub suits, uniforms or other suitable attire in animal areas. In specific instances other protective clothing may be required. PPE used for animal handling must not be worn outside of the animal handling facility.

Under no circumstance is eating, smoking, drinking or application of cosmetics allowed in animal areas.

Animal allergens are of particular concern for laboratory workers, as 10% of animal workers, including laboratory workers with research animal contact, develop allergies to animals.

Additional Information and Resources:

1. [Animal Allergens](#)