

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM FOR ANIMAL HANDLERS
Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
The University of Mississippi Medical Center
(UMMC)

(Revised October 2020)

1. NEW EMPLOYEES

All new employees will be required to complete a medical history and undergo a physical examination prior to assuming the assigned duties of handling animals. They will also be required to have a tuberculin skin or TB blood (IGRA) test at that time. Immunization history will be obtained. If tetanus booster is needed, it will be offered at this time.

2. YEARLY HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

All employees who work with research animals will be required to complete a tuberculosis screening questionnaire annually, with the exception of those who work with non-human primates who will undergo tuberculin or IGRA testing annually. At this yearly visit, immunization status to tetanus should be reviewed, and boosters should be offered, if indicated.

3. INJURY PROTOCOL FOR ANIMAL EXPOSURES (OTHER THAN NON-HUMAN PRIMATES)

All injuries should be recorded on the online Employee Injury Report prior to arriving in Student and Employee Health (601-984-1185). The employee should report to Student Employee Health (N-136) for evaluation during standard hours [Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 4:00 pm] or to the UMMC Emergency Room after hours and on weekends or holidays. Injuries that are of a serious or potentially life-threatening nature (i.e. significant trauma, head injuries, etc.) should be sent to the UMMC Emergency Room immediately for evaluation.

4. INJURY PROTOCOL FOR ANIMAL EXPOSURES (NON-HUMAN PRIMATES)

Immediately following the bite or scratch, the employee should carry out the following steps:

1. Primate exposure kit should be located and taken to the nearest sink.
2. Soak or scrub the wound with water and iodine soap for a minimum of 15 minutes.
3. Call for HELP. Notify co-workers or other personnel so that you can receive help quickly.
4. The employee should then report as soon as possible to Student and Employee Health (N-136) for evaluation during standard hours [Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 4:00 pm] or to the UMMC EMERGENCY ROOM after hours and on weekends or holidays. After washing the wound, the injured employee should complete the Employee Injury Report online before arriving in Student and Employee Health. If a computer is not available, the employee may complete the injury report after arriving in Student and Employee Health. Please include identifying information for the contact primate on the Employee Injury Report.
5. Upon arrival to the Student and Employee Health or the UMMC EMERGENCY ROOM, the employee will be evaluated according to the "Recommendations for Prevention of and Therapy for Exposure to B Virus (Cercopithecine Herpesvirus 1)" (Clinical Infectious Disease, Volume 35, Issue 10, 15 Nov. 2002, pgs. 1191-1203).
6. Initial blood tests will be obtained on the employee for baseline studies and follow-up blood tests will be done three to four weeks following exposure.
7. Laboratory Animal Facilities veterinary staff will be notified such that the appropriate laboratory data can be obtained on the contact primate.
8. The Student and Employee Health Department will arrange all follow-ups.

5. PREGNANCY

It is recommended that all pregnant animal handlers refrain from changing cat bedding and cages for the duration of the pregnancy to minimize their risk of contracting toxoplasma infection.

As the supervisor of an activity involving biohazards and animals, I have read, understand, and will ensure my personnel are aware of and will abide by the above procedures.

Print Name _____

Title/Supervisory Role _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Copy: 1) to IBC, 2) maintained by supervisor and 3) in Biosafety Manual (if BSL-2 or higher).