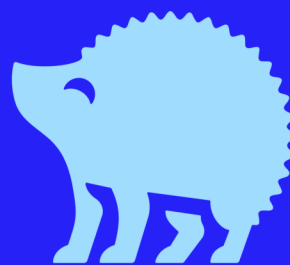


## BITESIZE Understanding Zoonosis

# BE AWARE, STAY PREPARED: THE ZOONOSIS CHALLENGE.



### ZOONOTIC DISEASE, OR ZOONOSIS...

Refers to any disease that primarily exists in animals but has the capability to be transmitted to humans. These diseases can range in severity from mild conditions to debilitating and potentially fatal illnesses. Given their potential impact, it is critical to understand and implement effective preventive measures to mitigate the risks associated with zoonotic diseases.

### HOW ARE ZOONOTIC DISEASES SPREAD?

Infectious diseases can spread through several transmission routes, with many zoonotic diseases utilising multiple methods to infect humans. Notably, some animals can carry and shed pathogens without displaying any visible signs of illness. Stress, particularly in wildlife taken in for rehabilitation, often exacerbates pathogen shedding, heightening the risk of disease transmission.

### THE FIVE PRIMARY ROUTES OF DISEASE TRANSMISSION...

#### Inhalation Respiratory Droplets:

Pathogens spread through respiratory droplets from coughs or sneezes require close contact for transmission. Airborne particles from dried feces, respiratory secretions, feathers, or dander can also be inhaled, especially when handling animals or cleaning enclosures.

**Direct Contact:** Physical contact with an infected animal or its bodily fluids can result in transmission.

**Oral/Faecal-Oral Transmission:** Ingestion of contaminated food or water, or contact with faeces containing pathogens.

**Fomite Transmission:** Pathogens spread via inanimate objects (e.g., tools, equipment, bedding).

#### Vector-Borne Transmission:

Transmission occurs through vectors such as ticks, fleas, or mosquitoes carrying the pathogen.

### THE CONSEQUENCES OF POOR HYGIENE!

Failing to practice proper hygiene can have serious repercussions.

Don't be the person who compromises the health of the animals in your care or your colleagues. Remember: poor hygiene and inadequate handwashing are among the leading causes of disease spread in these environments.

### WEAR APPROPRIATE PPE

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is crucial, not only for safeguarding the health of the wearer but also, when used correctly, for reducing the risk of disease transmission between animals.