

## What is a Zoonotic Disease?

Zoonoses, or better known as **Zoonotic diseases**, are caused by germs that can be spread between animals and people. Over 60% of human pathogens have been found to be zoonotic in origin.

Zoonotic diseases are very common. Scientists estimate that more than 6 out of every 10 known infectious diseases in people can be spread from animals, and 3 out of every 4 new or emerging infectious diseases in people come from animals.

### So, where do zoonotic diseases come from?

Animals play a large part in our everyday lives. Whether it's through work, travel or our personal lives, people may come in contact with an animal.

However, animals can carry harmful germs like viruses, bacterial, parasites, and fungi that can be transmitted to people and cause illness. These illnesses can range from mild to serious and can even cause death. Even though an animal can appear healthy, they may be carrying germs that can make people sick, depending on the zoonotic disease.

### How do germs spread from animals to humans?

- Direct contact with saliva, blood, blood, urine, mucous, feces, or other body fluids of an infected animal.
- Indirect contact from areas that animals live and roam, or objects and surfaces that have been contaminated with germs.
- Vector-borne is when you are bitten by a tick, mosquito, or flea.
- Foodborne is when you eat or drink something unsafe that has been contaminated with feces from an infected animal.
- Waterborne is when you drink or come in contact with water that has been contaminated with feces from an infected animal.

### How can you protect yourself?

- Wash your hands.
- Prevent bites from mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas.
- Try to avoid getting bitten or scratched by animals.
- Learn how to handle food safely.
- Be aware of zoonotic disease at home and while traveling.