AXE VALLEY VETS
Caring for your Animals

SURGERIES

Blackford
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Redmans Hill
Blackford
Somerset
BS28 4NG

Wells
01749 670966
23 St Cuthbert Street
Wells
Somerset
BA5 2AW

Cheddar
01934 741292
Unit 1 Saxon Court
Cheddar
Somerset
BS27 3NA

Woolavington
01278 686971
Martlands Farm
Woolavington Road
Woolavington
Somerset
TA7 8ED

Protocol for Dealing with Zoonoses

Zoonoses are diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans. It is important to note that zoonoses may be contracted from both ill and apparently healthy animals. Wherever there are animals there is therefore the potential for zoonotic pathogens to be present and thus in *every* instance of dealing with animals an assessment of the hazard and its associated risk must be undertaken, and appropriate controls put in place to prevent transmission.

Transmission of disease can be through a variety of routes, for example cuts, bites, scratches, accidental ingestion of infected material, inhalation of aerosols of contaminated materials, or through infected material coming into contact with exposed cuts and abrasions.

Some of the common zoonoses which may be encountered in small animal practice and which should always be considered are cat scratch disease, campylobacter, E Coli, giardia, leptospirosis, lyme disease, ringworm, salmonella, toxocara, toxoplasma, and tuberculosis. Precautions to be undertaken whenever a zoonotic disease is suspected may include some or all of:

- Practising good personal hygiene
- Providing prompt and effective first aid treatment to cuts and scratches
- Using PPE (e.g. disposable clothing, gloves, shoe covers, masks, aprons and goggles)
- Isolating and treating sick animals
- Educating clients, both in terms of reducing the risk of some diseases by vaccinating and using appropriate anti-parasite treatments, and in terms of informing them of the need to contact their GP in case of suspected transmission.

Pregnant women should especially be aware of the risks from some zoonoses, and be extra vigilant of protective measures and good personal hygiene.

- Pregnant women should be aware of the risk of toxoplasmosis from feline faeces, and must always wear gloves to handle cat litter trays.

Known immunocompromised members of staff must not be involved in the care of animals with suspected zoonotic diseases, and must be informed if a potential zoonotic patient is admitted into the practice.

Clinical waste from dealing with zoonotic patients is classified as hazardous / infective and must therefore be disposed of in orange waste bags.

RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE FARM ANIMAL PRACTICE
RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE SMALL ANIMAL PRACTICE