Working with Ferrets

All personnel working with animals, their tissues, or working in areas where animals are housed must complete an Animal Use Medical Screening form. This form screens for exposure to possible health hazards in the work environment. Complete the form online at this link: [https://ucs.admin.washington.edu/era/uwnetid/AUMS/](https://ucs.admin.washington.edu/era/uwnetid/AUMS/)

1. Tetanus booster should be obtained every 10 years.
2. The need for rabies immunization for persons working with feral or quarantined animals needs to be evaluated by the Occupational Health Nurse. Contact UW Employee Health Clinic (EHC) at 206-685-1026.
3. Zoonotic diseases:
   - **Listeriosis:** Transmission: contact or aerosolization. Disease in people: fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, conjunctivitis.
   - **Campylobacteriosis:** Transmission: fecal-oral route. Disease in people: acute gastrointestinal illness with or without blood, abdominal pain, fever.
   - **Influenza:** Transmission: respiratory droplets, fomites. Influenza can be transmitted from people to ferrets and then spread from ferrets back to people. People with any signs of the flu should not handle ferrets.
   - **Rat Bite Fever:** Transmission: bites or scratches. Typically this bacteria does not cause disease in ferrets. Disease in people: flu-like symptoms, rash, joint infections, or systemic disease.
4. Protective gloves should be worn when working with ferrets. Hands should be thoroughly washed upon completion of tasks with the animal and between glove changes.
5. Injuries:
   - Immediately wash area thoroughly with soap and water for at least 15 minutes.
   - Control any bleeding and cover with protective dressing (bandage, etc.).
   - For any injuries, needlestick/sharps injury or for signs/symptoms of wound infection such as redness, swelling or pain, contact the Employee Health Clinic at Hall Health at 206-685-1026. After hours or if the clinic is unavailable, go to the nearest Emergency Department.
6. Illness: If you develop signs or symptoms that you think may be related to your work with animals and/or research work, contact the Employee Health Clinic at 206-685-1026. If you see your own provider, inform him/her that you work with these animals and any other pertinent information regarding your research work.