

# Stay safe and healthy while feeding reptiles and amphibians!



Live and frozen feeder rodents (such as mice and rats) and the reptiles and amphibians that eat them (snakes, lizards, turtles, and frogs) can sometimes carry germs that can make people sick. These germs can cause illnesses ranging from diarrhea to birth defects.

- Feeder rodents and reptiles can carry germs even if they look healthy and clean.
- Germs are shed in rodent and reptile droppings and can easily contaminate their bodies and anything in areas where they live.
  - » These germs can contaminate areas where rodents are housed or handled, or where frozen rodents are prepared, thawed, and stored. The germs can spread to people after they touch rodents, reptiles, or any areas that come in contact with these animals.
  - » Reptiles that live in tanks or cages can contaminate their habitats, including their water bowls.

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM GERMS

### FEED YOUR REPTILE SAFELY.

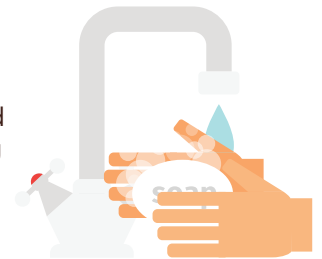
Handling frozen or live rodents is not recommended for children under 5 years old, adults over 65, or people with weakened immune systems because they are at a greater risk for serious illness from germs that animals can carry.

- Use frozen rodents when possible to reduce the risk of injury to you or your pet.
- Don't handle reptiles after handling rodents to reduce your risk of bites.
- Feed reptiles with tongs when using feeder rodents.
- Never feed your reptile wild rodents.



### WASH YOUR HANDS.

- Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water right after handling rodents and reptiles, or after touching anything that was in contact with these animals.
- Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer until you are able to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.



### KEEP IT CLEAN.

Clean and disinfect all surfaces and supplies that come in contact with rodents.

- Keep rodents, reptiles, and their supplies out of kitchens or other areas where food is prepared, served, stored, or consumed.
- Don't thaw frozen rodents in the microwave or in food preparation areas.



- Clean supplies outside the house when possible. If you clean supplies indoors, use a laundry sink or bathtub, and thoroughly clean and disinfect the area right after.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[WWW.CDC.GOV/HEALTHYPETS](http://WWW.CDC.GOV/HEALTHYPETS)



**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases