

## Animal Allergens

### **Allergens**

One of the most common health concerns in the laboratory animal setting is a work-associated allergy. The risk of developing an allergy depends on parameters such as species, facility, ventilation and the employee's "base-line" health status.

Risk Groups:

- **Normal:** No evidence of allergic disease;
- **Atopic:** Pre-existing allergic disease;
- **Asymptomatic:** Antibodies to animal allergens;
- **Symptomatic:** Clinical symptoms on exposure to allergenic animal proteins.

Symptoms of allergic reaction vary depending on the severity of the reaction and include:

- **Contact urticaria** with symptoms such as: redness, itchiness of skin, welts and hives;
- **Allergic conjunctivitis** with symptoms such as: sneezing, itchiness, clear nasal drainage, nasal congestion;
- **Allergic rhinitis** with symptoms such as: sneezing, itchiness, clear nasal drainage, nasal congestion;
- **Asthma** with symptoms such as: cough, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath;
- **Anaphylaxis** with symptoms such as: generalized itching, hives, throat tightness, eye or lip swelling, difficulty in swallowing, hoarseness, shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea.

Resources and websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/search.do?queryText=zoonotic+diseases&action=search>

<http://www.aaalac.org/>