

## **CLEANING** *vs.* **DISINFECTING**

**CLEANING** removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces or objects. This process doesn't necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, cleaning lowers the number of germs and the risk of spreading infection.

**DISINFECTING** kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals, such as bleach, to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process doesn't necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, disinfecting can further lower the risk of spreading infection.



## Enjoy your pets AND Stay Safe!



### **VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES**

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## **SAFE HANDLING** **REQUIRED!**



You may be one of the many Americans who own a pet reptile, amphibian or baby chick. Reptiles—corn snakes, iguanas, and red-eared sliders, and amphibians, frogs and toads, to name a few—are unique creatures and can make for interesting pets. There's nothing cuter than a baby chick. But pet reptiles, amphibians and baby fowl carry some risks to their owners, such as the potential for *Salmonella* infection.





## What are Salmonella and Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is an infection with bacteria called *Salmonella*. People get salmonellosis by ingesting *Salmonella* germs.

These germs can be found in the feces of many different animals such as reptiles, amphibians, rodents, live poultry and others or in the areas where these animals live and roam. These germs can also be found in water in tanks or aquaria where certain animals like turtles or water frogs live.

## What are the symptoms of salmonellosis in people?

Persons infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12-72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4-7 days, and most persons recover without treatment. However the illness can be serious, even fatal, in some people. Children under 5 years of age, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for salmonellosis and may develop more severe illness.

## TIPS FOR SAFETY

- After you touch your pets or anything in the area where they live and roam, **WASH YOUR HANDS!!**
- **DON'T** let children younger than 5 years, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems handle or touch feeder rodents, reptiles, amphibians or baby fowl.
- Don't snuggle or kiss, touch your mouth, eat or drink around reptiles, amphibians or baby fowl.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect all surfaces that come in contact with feeder rodents.
- Use designated, separate kitchen utensils when preparing feeder rodents or when feeding them to your pet reptile. Clean and disinfect those utensils after each use.



## What are FEEDER RODENTS??

Feeder rodents are mice and rats—both frozen and live—used to feed some reptiles, such as certain snakes and lizards, as well as some amphibians such as “pacman” frogs.

Feeder rodents fed to some reptiles or amphibians can be sources of *Salmonella* infection for people.

Freezing does not kill *Salmonella*, so both frozen and live feeder rodents can be contaminated. Some companies may irradiate packages of frozen feeder rodents to lower the risk of *Salmonella* contamination.

