

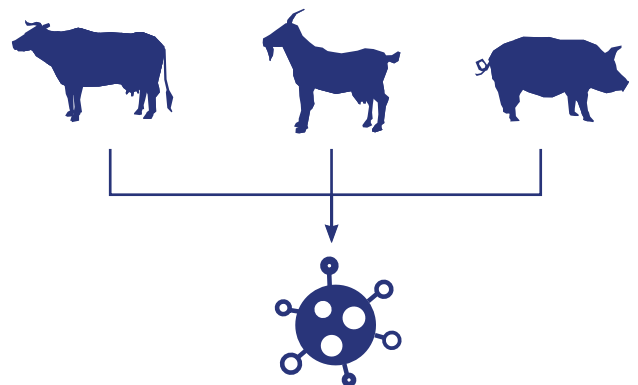
# Your cancer treatment and farm animals

If you work on a farm, continuing farm work during cancer treatment can help you to keep physically active, improve your sense of wellbeing, your mental health and quality of life during treatment time.

You may wonder how safe it is to be around farm animals, when you are being treated for cancer. Talk to your healthcare team about being around animals. If you have a weak immune system you will need to take extra precautions to reduce your risk of picking up infections.

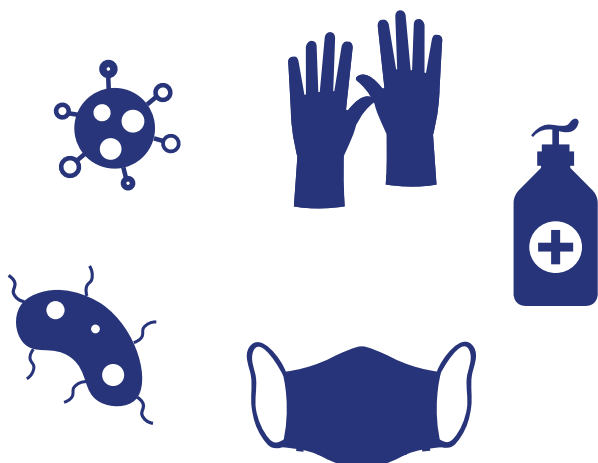
## Reduce your risk of infection

Livestock, including cows, sheep, pigs and goats, all naturally carry disease organisms that could spread to humans. Control measures, such as wearing personal protective equipment (for example, disposable gloves and plastic aprons) and hand washing are the most effective ways to reduce any risk of infection.



## Types of infection

There are a number of pathogens (substances that can cause disease, such as bacteria and viruses) found in animal waste. These pathogens can cause severe disease in people with a weak immune system. *Campylobacter*, *Cryptosporidium* and *E.coli* may be found in scouring young stock, and older stock may also shed *Salmonella* bacteria. Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and if you are exposed to any animal waste, remember to wash your hands thoroughly. Try to avoid scouring animals and their bedding where possible.



## Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that can be spread from animals such as cows to humans via infectious bodily fluids such as urine splashes. Wear PPE such as a face screen or goggles, a mask and waterproof clothing when working closely with unvaccinated animals (for example, when milking cows) or when handling wet bedding.

## Toxoplasmosis, enzootic abortion and orf

Toxoplasmosis, enzootic abortion and orf are the infections of most concern to sheep farmers. You can stop the spread of toxoplasmosis and enzootic abortion infections by vaccinating ewes, and by thoroughly washing your hands and disposing of cat litter, which can carry the toxoplasmosis parasite.

Orf virus can be passed to humans through contact with infected sheep or accidental exposure when using a live vaccine.

**Personal protective equipment such as gloves and aprons will significantly reduce exposure and risk of infection.**

## Tips to reduce risk of infection on the farm

- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly after handling farm animals or fences, buckets and bedding. Avoid hand-to-eye and mouth contact where possible.
- Take tea breaks and meals away from work areas.
- Wash and cover any cuts or abrasions on your skin.
- Avoid drinking unpasteurised milk as it increases the risk of Campylobacter, Brucellosis and Listeriosis.
- Make sure your farm dog is up to date with vaccinations, worming and flea and tick treatments.
- Wear PPE to avoid breathing in dust and spores when opening old silage bales, mouldy hay or grain.
- Change out of work clothes and shoes before going into your home to avoid spreading infection inside the home.
- Consider asking a family member or neighbour to tend to any livestock that have diarrhoea or have aborted foetal material.
- Avoid all contact with aborted material such as placentas and foetuses.
- Wear full arm-length rectal sleeves/gloves, a face visor and a calving gown/waterproof clothing when helping with calving.

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