



Health Risks Associated With Cat Feces

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It is important to know about the health risks associated with **cat feces** and cat diarrhea. You can keep the risk low by properly managing the cat litter and by taking special care around cats with diarrhea. The 2 most common and serious risks are the toxoplasmosis parasite and the E. Coli bacteria.

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is the infection that can result if the tiny parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* inhabits the human body. The only way to catch toxoplasmosis is to ingest the parasite. This happens if the owner touches their mouth or doesn't thoroughly wash

after coming into contact with cat feces or cat diarrhea. Most healthy people's immune systems can keep the parasite from causing symptoms. For the unborn fetus, toxoplasmosis can cause serious defects. Pregnant women and other people with compromised immunity should avoid cleaning the litter box or should wear gloves and make sure to thoroughly wash their hands after litter box cleaning. It is important to note that only cats who themselves have come into contact with the parasite will have infected cat feces. If a cat eats raw foods, their feces might be more at risk for the parasite. Most indoor cats do not have the parasite in their feces and a cat can be tested for the parasite. It's best to treat all cat feces as if it is infected, however.

Escherichia Coli

This bacterium, most commonly known as E. Coli, is usually harmless and lives in most human and animal intestinal tracts. Some strains cause severe illness in people if ingested. Most accidentally ingest the bacteria from hand to mouth contact after litter box cleaning. Symptoms result from the toxins released by the poisonous strains and include diarrhea and abdominal cramps.

Both toxoplasmosis and E. Coli can be avoided by properly washing hands after handling cat feces or cleaning up after cat diarrhea.

Health Hazards of Cat Urine

Cat urine that has sat for awhile often smells strongly of ammonia which can be harmful to humans. Any ingestion of any cat urine can lead to vomiting and diarrhea. If you notice that you are getting a headache or runny eyes when cleaning the litter box, you may need to wear a mask and clean the litter box more frequently.

Allergens In Cat Litter

Some people find themselves sneezing and having itchy eyes and nose after being around the litter box. This may be due to too much dust in the litter or an allergy to any chemicals or scents used in the litter itself.

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