



Animal Allergens

Workers who are in regular contact with furred animals often develop sensitivity to these animals although allergies to non-furred animals can occur. An estimated 21% of animal workers are estimated to have laboratory animal allergies, with symptoms ranging from mild discomfort to new-onset asthma. Commonly used laboratory animals and the allergen source include:

- Mouse (hair, dander, urine, serum)
- Rat (hair, dander, urine, saliva, serum)
- Guinea pig (hair, dander, urine)
- Rabbit (hair, dander, urine, saliva)
- Cat (hair, dander, saliva, serum)
- Dog (hair, dander, saliva, serum)

If you have a history of allergies to dogs/cats or have previously experienced allergy symptoms when working with laboratory animals, the University Employee Occupational Health Clinic (UEOHC) will contact you by email after your [Animal Handler](#) form has been reviewed. For individuals with frequent symptoms, you may be placed in a respiratory protection program to reduce your exposure to allergens. If you feel that you are at risk for anaphylaxis from exposure to lab animals (i.e. you carry an EpiPen due to a prior allergic reaction, have previously been taken to an Emergency Department for allergy symptoms, have a history of asthma requiring intubation, etc.) please notify your supervisor and contact the UEOHC at 919-966-9119 prior to working with animals.

All animal handlers are required to complete the Animal Handler Form prior to beginning work with animals at UNC. The **Animal Research Registration System** can be accessed [here](#).