Healthy Handling: Reptiles

Reptiles may have bacteria, such as *Salmonella*, that can cause disease in humans. Fortunately, taking a few simple precautions will help keep you healthy when handling reptiles:

- Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling reptiles or anything in their habitat.
- Avoid close facial contact with all reptiles.
- Never use food-preparation areas to clean reptile habitats or anything in their habitats. If you clean the habitat in the bathroom, disinfect the area completely afterwards.

Children under 5, pregnant women, senior citizens, and people with weakened immune systems run a greater risk of infection; contact your health care provider for more information.