

Do you know about The Risks of Reptile-Associated Salmonellosis?

Chances are, if you purchased your pet reptile* from a pet store, you were told about the risks of reptile-associated salmonellosis, a germ (*Salmonella*) that harms humans but not their carriers—pet reptiles. If you bought your pet from a street vendor or at a swap meet, especially a baby turtle, please read this carefully. THIS INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT.



Baby turtles—all reptiles—shed *Salmonella*; *Salmonella* can be deadly.

- *Salmonella*, the germ that causes the human disease, salmonellosis, can survive on unwashed, dry surfaces for *weeks*—floors, blankets, towels.
- Symptoms of salmonellosis include nausea, stomach cramps, diarrhea, fever, and headache, which usually last for 2 to 7 days. It can be deadly.
- Contact with baby turtles and all other reptiles can be a very serious health risk to infants, small children, and adults with weakened immune systems.



Baby turtles are hatchlings —not toys.

- The cute plastic bowl with its green palm tree is like an infant carrier or car seat to a baby turtle—not a home environment.
- Healthy baby turtles need 10-gallon tank with a heat lamp, water heater, a resting spot, a good filter, and turtle food specific to its breed.
- Your cute baby turtle will grow into a large adult turtle (about the size of a large dinner plate) that needs a 100-gallon tank, complete with heat lamp, etc.



Red-eared slider turtles, *the* most popular reptile pet in Los Angeles County, cause environmental damage—here and around the world.

- Turtle farms in the United States have used so much antibiotics in raising red-eared slider turtles that we now have even *more* antibiotic-resistant strains of the germ, *Salmonella*, and the disease it causes, salmonellosis.
- Red-eared slider baby turtles become aggressive adults which multiply rapidly in city park ponds, streams and rivers, and other water ways.
- With no known natural “enemies” they replace native turtles, and other local wildlife, and cause serious environmental harm.

Special Thanks! to our Partners in Public Health at Austins Turtle Page (ATP) for allowing us to reproduce selected photographs and information from their web pages at www.austinsturtlepage.com/.



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