

Dog kisses might not be a healthy indulgence

By Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento Bee

They give you joy. They give you loyalty. They give you sloppy kisses.

But before you allow Fido or Fluffy to climb into bed with you at night, as an increasing number of Americans are doing, know that they can also give you something else: zoonoses.

A UC Davis veterinary professor has penned an article for a scientific journal showing that people who allow their pets to lick them, give them “kisses” or sleep with them are at risk for a variety of diseases known as zoonoses. The conditions can range from the mundane to the life threatening.

Bruno Chomel and his co-author, Ben Sun, emphasize that pets provide many health benefits, including stress relief, and they stop short of recommending that people abstain from smooching their pooches. But in reviewing reports from several countries, they argue that such interactions carry some risk, particularly among infants and people whose immune systems have been weakened by disease, chemotherapy or other medicines.

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