

Warning: young children should not keep hedgehogs as pets - or hamsters, baby chicks, lizards and turtles, for that matter - because of risks for disease. That's according to the nation's leading pediatricians' group in a new report about dangers from exotic animals.

Besides evidence that they can carry dangerous and sometimes potentially deadly germs, exotic pets may be more prone than cats and dogs to bite, scratch or claw - putting children younger than 5 particularly at risk, the report says.

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