



## ■ Overview

One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral approach that recognizes that the health of people, animals, and the environment are deeply interconnected and cannot be understood in isolation. Human medicine, veterinary medicine, and environmental science were historically separate disciplines — but the past century of emerging infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and climate-driven ecosystem change has made it undeniable that siloed thinking fails everyone.

■ **The Core Principle:** Approximately 60% of all known human infectious diseases originated in animals. Of emerging infectious diseases identified since 1940, more than 70% are zoonotic in origin. One Health is not a new idea — it is a recognition of a biological reality that has always existed.

## ■ History of One Health

The concept has roots in the work of 19th-century physician Rudolf Virchow, who coined the term *zoonosis* and argued that animal and human medicine were inseparable. In the early 2000s, after SARS, avian influenza H5N1, and growing antibiotic resistance threats, major health organizations formalized the One Health framework:

- **2004:** The Manhattan Principles — 12 recommendations for preventing epidemic disease and maintaining ecosystem integrity
- **2008:** The WHO, FAO, and OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) formally adopted One Health as a guiding framework for global disease surveillance
- **2010:** The Tripartite Agreement between WHO, FAO, and OIE established formal collaboration mechanisms for zoonotic disease response
- **2020–present:** COVID-19 brought unprecedented global attention to the risks of spillover events from wildlife to humans — and to the cost of ignoring the human-animal-environment interface

## ■ The Three Pillars of One Health

**Human Health:** Epidemiology, infectious disease medicine, public health infrastructure, and clinical care form one pillar. Human health cannot be protected from zoonotic threats without understanding the animal reservoir.

**Animal Health:** Veterinary medicine — including companion animal care, livestock medicine, and wildlife health — forms the second pillar. Animals are both sentinels of environmental change and reservoirs for pathogens that spill into human populations.

**Environmental Health:** Ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, water and food safety, climate stability, and habitat preservation form the third pillar. Deforestation, habitat fragmentation, and warming temperatures drive human-animal contact and accelerate spillover events.

## ■ One Health in Your Daily Life



One Health is not abstract policy — it shows up in everyday decisions:

- Vaccinating your pet against rabies protects your family and your community
- Keeping your dog on heartworm and tick prevention reduces local vector burdens
- Choosing antibiotic use carefully (in people and pets) slows resistance development
- Not feeding wildlife keeps pathogens from jumping between wild and domestic animals
- Reporting sick wildlife to local animal control supports surveillance systems
- Supporting urban green space maintenance reduces tick and rodent-borne disease pressure

■ **Why This Matters to XVetCare:** As an LVT-led practice in one of the most densely populated cities in the world, XVetCare sits at the intersection of companion animal medicine and public health. NYC's urban ecosystem — shared with rats, pigeons, raccoons, deer ticks, and mosquitoes — makes One Health more than a philosophical framework. It is a daily clinical reality. Every prevention conversation we have, every vaccine we give, and every parasite we treat is an act of One Health stewardship.

■ **One Health starts with preventive care.** Vaccines, parasite prevention, and regular wellness exams are the most direct tools you have. Schedule your pet's next visit today.

## ■ Final Summary

One Health recognizes that human, animal, and environmental health are inseparable. The choices you make for your pet's health ripple outward — into your household, your neighborhood, and your ecosystem.

### ■ Related XVC Guides:

- [Zoonotic Diseases Overview](#) · [Rabies: A One Health Disease](#)
- [Preventive Care](#) · [Flea & Tick Prevention](#) · [Heartworm Prevention](#)



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