

From our Registered Nurse:

Pets and Coronavirus

Can animals get the coronavirus and develop COVID-19? There is a lot we don't know about the coronavirus and its effect on non-humans. Many of the answers in this section will be incomplete. We know that this coronavirus existed in bats before it jumped into humans and probably infected another animal species between bats and humans. We know that some animals have developed cases including tigers at a New York zoo. We do not know how easy it is for the virus to infect different kinds of animals or if any animals are immune.

Can my pets get COVID-19? There have been reports of some cats and dogs contracting COVID-19 but these are very rare cases. Your own health is at greater risk.

Can I give COVID-19 to my pets? Possibly but unlikely. If you do contract the coronavirus, you should isolate from your pets just as you would from your human family members.

Can my pets give COVID-19 to me? This is also unlikely. In order to infect you, your pet would have to become infected by another person first which is also rare. You are more likely to get the infection directly from that other person instead of through your pet.

Can my pets give COVID-19 to other pets? We do not know. It seems unlikely at present. Just because a virus can infect a species, does not mean it can transfer between that species.

How do I keep my pets safe from the coronavirus? You should use the same precautions you would use with humans. Keep your pets away from people outside your family. Cats should remain indoors if possible. When walking dogs, keep them on a leash and at least 6 feet from other people. Do not try to put a mask on your pets. It will not be effective and may be a choking hazard.

My pet seems sick, how do I tell if it is COVID-19? You will likely not know if your pet has the coronavirus or another disease. Notify your veterinarian if your pet is sick and let them know the symptoms you are seeing. Keep your pet at home and follow your vet's advice for treatment. Do not bring them to the vet's office without calling first.

How do I get my pet tested? Unless your pet has symptoms of COVID-19 and has been around an infected person, testing is not recommended. If your pet has a likely case of COVID-19, take care of them like you would a human family member and do not let them outside until your veterinarian tells you it's okay.

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Sources:



MassSupport Network

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/positive-pet.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/pets.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID-19-and-Animals>

<https://www.oie.int/en/scientific-expertise/specific-information-and-recommendations/questions-and-answers-on-2019novel-coronavirus/>



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