

What You Need to Know About COVID-19 and Pets

Animals, including pets, can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19

We are still learning about SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, but we know it can spread from people to animals in some situations, especially during close contact with a person with COVID-19. A small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, have been infected SARS-CoV-2, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19. **Based on the information available to date, the risk of pets spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.**

Protect your pet from SARS-CoV-2

We know that most pets get infected after close contact with their owner or another household member with COVID-19. There is no vaccine to protect pets from SARS-CoV-2.

To protect pets from the virus:

- Pet owners and every eligible person in the household should get vaccinated.
- People with COVID-19 should not have contact with pets.
- Pet owners should not allow pets to have contact with unvaccinated people outside the household, if possible.
- Do not put masks on pets; masks could harm your pet.
- There is no evidence that the virus can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets. Do not wipe or bathe your pet with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or other products, such as hand sanitizer, counter-cleaning wipes, or other industrial or surface cleaners.

If you get sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with pets and other animals during your illness.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sharing food, and sleeping in the same bed.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a mask and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

Symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 infection in pets

Infected pets might get sick or they might not have any symptoms. Most pets who have gotten sick only had mild illness and fully recovered. Some signs of illness in pets may include fever, coughing, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, lethargy, sneezing, nose or eye discharge, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Testing pets is usually not necessary

Routine testing of pets for SARS-CoV-2 is not recommended. If you're concerned about your pet's health, work with your veterinarian to ensure that your pet receives appropriate care. If you are concerned your pet is sick after being around a person with COVID-19, talk to your veterinarian. Your veterinarian may want to rule out other more common causes of respiratory illnesses in pets first.

If you think your pet has SARS-CoV-2

If your pet gets sick after contact with a person with COVID-19, call your veterinarian first and let them know the pet was around a person with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

Do not surrender, euthanize, or abandon pets because of SARS-CoV-2

At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading SARS-CoV-2 to people. COVID-19 is mainly spreading from person to person through close contact. **There is no reason to give up or euthanize pets because of SARS-CoV-2.**



For more information, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/covid-19/pets.html>

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)