COVID-19 Checklist for Pet Owners and Veterinarians

Top Things You Can Do to Protect Against COVID-19

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is aware of a very small number of pets outside the United States reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 after close contact with people with COVID-19.

Two dogs from Hong Kong and a cat in Belgium are known to have tested positive. These cases are considered human-to-animal transmission. At this point there is no evidence in the U.S. to suggest that any animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19 to humans and/or that pets can develop COVID-19. Even if a dog or cat are infected, that doesn’t necessarily mean they are infectious or contagious; they are not necessarily able to transmit/spread the virus to people or other animals.

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, strongly recommends taking the following actions:

For pet owners:

- Practice everyday preventive actions to stay healthy around pets. Wash your hands after handling animals or their food, waste, or supplies. Practice good pet hygiene and properly clean up after pets.

- Identify backup caretakers for pets if you have or are suspected of having COVID-19. If you must care for your pet(s) while sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

- If you are sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet(s) including, petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Service animals should be permitted to stay with their handlers.

- Implement practical measures to protect yourself, your family, or pets from this or any other contagious respiratory illness.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov
While there is no vaccination against COVID-19, always vaccinate pets as recommended by your veterinarian to protect them from other diseases.

For veterinarians:

- Communicate about COVID-19 with your staff. Share information about what is currently known about COVID-19, the potential for surge, and your facility’s preparedness plans. Postpone meetings or hold them remotely.

- Ensure that sick employees stay home. Whenever possible, employees who report to work should stay at least 6 feet apart from each other and clients.

- Counsel clients on disease prevention practices, including how to stay safe and healthy around pets and other animals.

  Use telemedicine whenever possible and appropriate.

- Limit house calls when possible. Consider examining animals outdoors instead of in client homes.

- Limit the number of people in waiting areas. Ask clients to wait in their cars. If multiple people are in waiting areas, ensure they remain 6 feet apart by using signage or tape on the floor.

- Post visual alerts (signs, posters) at entrances and in strategic places providing instruction on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette. Ensure prevention supplies are available (tissues, waste receptacles, soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes).

- Increase the frequency of and enhance environmental cleanings using EPA-approved disinfectants. Clean exam rooms between each pet.

- Cancel or postpone all non-essential or elective surgeries or procedures. Monitor the availability or personal protective equipment (PPE) and implement Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment. If you have surplus PPE to contribute to the state stockpile for healthcare workers, please contact together@governor.ohio.gov or your local Emergency Management Agency.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov
For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line by texting the keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.

Additional resources:
CDC’s Healthy Pets, Healthy People website.
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 Ohio Department of Health

PREVENTION

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

- STAY HOME
- PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING
- GET ADEQUATE SLEEP AND EAT WELL-BALANCED MEALS
- WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)
- DRY HANDS WITH A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY YOUR HANDS
- COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING
- AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES
- CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN
- CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR
- PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov