



COVID-19 RESPONSE

ANIMALS AND COVID-19

Keep yourself and your animals healthy during pandemic.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses associated with respiratory illness in birds and mammals. COVID-19 is a member of the coronavirus family. Other coronaviruses can cause illness in certain animals including dogs, cats, cattle, camels, ferrets and bats. Coronaviruses that commonly infect dogs and cats do not infect humans.

There have been no reports of COVID-19 in domestic animals including pets and livestock in the U.S. There has been one report of a tiger with respiratory illness in a New York zoo that tested positive for COVID-19. Vaccines routinely used to help protect animals from coronaviruses offer no protection in humans and should not be used to prevent COVID-19. Do not self-medicate or self-test for COVID-19.

There have been no reports of domestic dogs or domestic cats in the U.S. infected with COVID-19. There have been a very small number of pets, including dogs and cats, outside the U.S. reported to be infected with

the virus that causes COVID-19 after close contact with people with COVID-19. At the time of this writing, there is no known animal-to-human spread of COVID-19 involving pets. Ongoing research to understand how and if different animals could be affected by COVID-19 is being conducted.

The most effective method of disease prevention is to avoid exposure to the virus.

- Avoid close contact—stay at home, putting at least a 6-foot distance between yourself and others.
- Clean hands often—wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used if soap and water are unavailable.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a face cover if you must be around others.
- Cover coughs and sneezes by coughing or sneezing into your elbow and sleeve.
- Clean and disinfect—surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected often. COVID-19 is susceptible to most common household disinfectants.



CONTACT

► **Rosslyn Biggs, DVM**
Assistant Clinical Professor
rosslyn.biggs@okstate.edu
405-744-8587



While the primary concern of the COVID-19 pandemic is human health, animal owners should have plans to ensure proper care of their animals in an emergency. As individuals prepare for the unexpected, they should also develop plans for their animals. Pet owners should have more than one option for pet care in their plan in the event the usual pet sitter or boarding facility is unavailable. Animal food, medication, health records as well as transport options should be readily available. Farmers and ranchers should make similar considerations specific to their operation. Considerations for supplying feed and water as well as routine health care should be planned in advance. All animal owners should coordinate with their veterinarian.

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed) out of an abundance of caution, restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like you would around



people. It is recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. This can help ensure both you and your animals stay healthy. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. Avoid direct contact with animals until the illness resolves. Do not pet, snuggle, groom or otherwise touch animals unless necessary. If you have a service animal or must care for your animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them. A face cover over your mouth and nose should be considered as well. Any sign of animal illness should be reported to a veterinarian immediately.



OTHER RESOURCES

Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine
<https://vetmed.okstate.edu/covid-19.html>

Oklahoma State University Extension
<https://extension.okstate.edu/coronavirus.html>

American Veterinary Medical Association
<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/covid-19>

<https://www.avma.org/resources/pet-owners/emergency-care/pets-and-disasters>

CDC
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#-covid19-animals>