

At VRCC Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Hospital, we are closely monitoring the current COVID-19 outbreak and what it means for our companion animals. We will update this page with relevant information as it becomes available, however, we recommend checking trusted government agencies for the latest updates.

VRCC is committed to continuing to provide the highest quality care of services for your pet. In the interest of all of our clients and staff, the VRCC team requests that any clients who are exhibiting symptoms such as: fever, cough, shortness of breath, or breathing difficulties, refrain from coming into the hospital, or reschedule your appointment for a later time. Our Doctors and staff are always here to answer your questions or concerns regarding your pet at 303-874-PETS.

Recommended Sources and Articles:

- [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control | Interim Guidance for Public Health Professionals Managing People With COVID-19 in Home Care and Isolation Who Have Pets or Other Animals](#)
- [World Small Animal Veterinary Association \(WSAVA\) | The New Coronavirus and Companion Animals – Advice for WSAVA Members](#)
- <https://www.avma.org/blog/what-do-you-need-know-about-coronavirus>

Can COVID-19 infect companion animals?

Short Answer: It's unclear.

[A dog in Hong Kong tested “weak positive” for COVID-19](#), suggesting that human-to-animal transmission might be possible. However, there is still a lot that is unknown, and the lack of other positive results in companion animals makes it hard for researchers to answer this question definitively.

So far, the dog in Hong Kong has shown no clinical signs of infection. The dog's owner had previously tested positive for COVID-19, and it is believed that the dog's virus came from the owner. At this time, it is unclear whether the dog can spread the disease or if transmission stops with the dog.

As a precaution with any infectious disease, infected humans should isolate themselves from their pets as they would with any other family member and follow the hygiene and preventive measures described below.

Can COVID-19 be transmitted by companion animals?

Short Answer: It's highly unlikely.

At this point, there is no evidence that COVID-19 can spread from an infected companion animal to a human. However, the virus is thought to spread by contact with contaminated surfaces (which can include your pet's fur/nose/tongue), so please follow the hygiene and preventive measures described below.

How can I protect my pet?

Since there is no vaccine for the new coronavirus, preventive steps and preparation are the best ways to protect yourself and your pet.

Practice good hygiene to stay healthy

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds and be sure to get the back of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Wash your hands after touching or playing with your pets. While there is no evidence at this time that pets can spread the coronavirus, washing hands after interacting with animals is always a good idea.
- When you do not have access to soap and water, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home when you are not feeling well.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces you touch often.

Create an emergency plan for your pet

- Have a two-week supply of your pet's food on hand in case you are not able to get to the store.
- Create a list of the medications your pet takes, including dosages and administration instructions. Make sure you have enough medication for at least two weeks.
- Identify a trusted relative, friend, or sitter who will help care for your pet if you become ill and cannot care for your pet for a period of time.
- Make sure your pet is microchipped and wearing up-to-date identification tags.

If you contract COVID-19

- Restrict contact with your pet, just as you would other people.
- Avoid direct contact with pets, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food.
- Avoid sneezing or coughing on, or near your pet.
- If you must care for your pet while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact, and wear a facemask.

What is VRCC doing to protect patients, clients, and staff from COVID-19?

We are closely monitoring the evolving guidance from the CDC, as well as the Colorado State Health Department, and taking preventive measures to ensure our facility is as clean and germ-free as possible. We are:

- Installing extra sanitation stations throughout the hospital.
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting all areas of our hospital.
- Instituting a “no handshakes” policy.
- Encouraging clients to reschedule appointments if they are not feeling well.
- Ensuring constant communication with our team to ensure they are aware of CDC updates.