



### Can dogs and cat contract or spread COVID-19?

According to the World Health Organization, there's no evidence that domesticated pets can spread this strain of coronavirus through animal-to-human transmission.

### Can Pets contract COVID-19 from humans ?

The good news is that transmission rates appear to be slim, requiring a large virus load from person to pet, and pets may not be at risk for serious symptoms or complications from the disease.

### Precautions to be taken by pet owners.

The pet owners who are showing symptoms of illness should limit their interaction with their pets.

Whenever possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick.

If you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food.

If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets.

### Precautions to be taken during walking your dog outside

- Take your dog to walk your dog so that it can relieve itself. But these walks should be short, individual – no more than one person – and without making contact with other animals or people.
- Make them stand on a newspaper, and ensure they are not coming into contact with common-area surfaces like lift walls, or corridors where there is a chance for contamination
- Keep a bottle with water and detergent to clean up and bags for faeces. This is a basic hygiene measure in force not only during the days on confinement but should be followed a routine practice.
- Prefer the hours when fewer people are around, to avoid contact.

### Does Coronavirus Covid-19 also affects the physical and mental health of our pets, especially our dogs?

A dog's well-being depends on three fundamental aspects, which are physical exercise, exploring the surroundings and social interaction.

Plan a series of activities which anybody can do at home in order to stimulate and maintain your dog's well-being viz.

- Playing is a great way to make sure your dogs get physical exercise.
- Play at least twice a day for 15 and 20 minutes eachtime.
- This way the animal keeps fit, while it is also a way of interacting with them.
- A good way to start would be teaching them simple instructions like sit and stay, and gradually work your way into more complex tasks.
- Use doggy puzzle toys
- Play Hide and Seek and create indoor obstacle course or train your dog to use the treadmill.
- Mental stimulation can help your dog manage the anxiety of a new routine, less exercise, and the residual stress

from family members during these challenging times.

- Ensure they get a little sunshine, fresh air and some indoor exercise.
- Don't let them overeat and teach them some new tricks.

### **What rules of hygiene should be followed as pet owners?**

- ✓ Wash their paws with warm water and soap, or a sanitizer, and brush their fur down thoroughly.
- ✓ Give your dog regular baths with hot water and check its nails for unusual growth or dirt.
- ✓ Disinfect all equipment correctly (leash, collar, etcetera) and leave it at the door entrance.
- ✓ Do not use face masks on pets, as they are of no use and may asphyxiate them.
- ✓ Wash your hands before and after your contact with pets

### **Should your pet wear a mask or booties for protection?**

This is a total waste of money, a total waste of time." The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mostly from person to person through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing and talking.

### **Should you get your pet tested for COVID-19?**

No, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA is not recommending tests for pets at this time.

### **Advice to pet parents during these difficult times**

Create a better routine with their cats and dogs.

- Teach your pets new skills and tricks.
- It's time to rebuild and reboot.
- It is an established fact that people with pets have better emotional health. This holds true even during this phase of the lockdown.
- Pets help us in a great way to emotionally detox.
- Pets don't demand much – just your time. And the lockdown is a great opportunity to give them your undivided attention.
- "We don't want people to panic. We don't want people to be afraid of pets"
- Veterinarians and their staff should review and adhere to their biosafety and biosecurity protocols for infectious diseases to ensure the safety of themselves and their patients.

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### **Resources:**

- *CDC's up-to-date information on COVID-19.; Animals and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).*
- *Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals.*
- *Interim Recommendations for Intake of Companion Animals from Households where Humans with COVID-19.*
- *NASPHV Compendium of Veterinary Standard Precautions for Zoonotic Disease Prevention in Veterinary.*
- *CDC's Healthy Pets, Healthy People Website. How to Care for your Dog in the Time of COVID-19.-Sharon Elber.*