



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**March 22, 2020**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Kathryn Finnie, Executive Director  
Vermont Veterinary Medical Association  
802-878-6888  
[kathy@vtvets.org](mailto:kathy@vtvets.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**COVID-19 and Your Pets**

*By M. Kathleen Shaw, DVM*  
*Vermont Veterinary Medical Association*

The corona virus pandemic has left many worried about the safety of their pets and whether or not the virus can be transmitted to/from their dogs. Infectious disease experts and multiple international and domestic human and animal health organizations **agree there is no evidence at this point to indicate that pets become ill with COVID-19 or that they spread it to other animals, including people.** (There are dog- specific and cat- specific corona viruses that have been around for years, and these viruses ONLY infect dogs and cats, not humans).

We know that in people, transmission primarily occurs when there is contact with an infected person's bodily secretions, such as saliva or mucus droplets in a cough or sneeze. Transmission via touching a pet who has been sneezed or coughed on by an infected person is less likely because fibrous pet fur can absorb and trap the virus, making it harder to contract through simple touch.

What's a worried pet owner to do? Don't panic! **If you are not ill with COVID-19** social distancing and sheltering in place doesn't apply to your pets. In fact, you'll have more time than ever to enjoy them so interact with them as you normally would, including walking, feeding, and playing. You should continue to practice good hygiene during those interactions (e.g., wash hands with soap and water before and after interacting with your pet; ensure your pet is kept well-groomed; regularly clean your pet's food and water bowls, bedding material, and toys).

**If you are ill with COVID-19** limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. Have another member of your household take care of walking, feeding, and playing with your pet. If you have a service animal or you must care for your pet, then wear a facemask; don't share food, kiss, or hug them; and wash your hands before and after any contact with them.

For responsible pet owners, preparing in advance is key. The American Veterinary Medical Association urges pet owners to have an emergency kit prepared, with at least two weeks' worth of your pet's food and any needed medications. Most veterinary clinics are still open, but many are electing to mail you your pet's prescriptions in order to limit contact. So, it's important to call well in advance of when you'll need them to allow the postal service to get them to you. If your pet needs to go to the clinic for an urgent medical problem, and you are feeling sick at all, please have someone else bring the pet for you.

While we are recommending these as good practices, it is important to remember that, to date, there have not been any reports of pets or other animals becoming ill with COVID-19, and there is currently no evidence that pets can spread COVID-19 to other animals, including people. For up

to date information on COVID-19 and pets as well as FAQs, go to the website of the American Veterinary Medical Association ([www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)).

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*The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA) is a professional organization of 385 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine.*