

COVID-19 and Pets

Studies have shown that there are many health benefits of owning a pet. They can increase opportunities to exercise and get outside. Pets can help manage loneliness and depression by giving us companionship. As the world faces the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever people need the support of their pets for their health and well-being. With so many people staying home right now, it's being recommended that people consider fostering or adopting an animal if they are able to. Review this list of [Animal Shelters and Pet Rescues Across Colorado](#) to explore your options.

Understandably, people have concerns about how the COVID-19 may impact the health and safety of their animals and what that means for themselves and their families. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available. For current CDC guidance for you and your pet, please visit [CDC website](#).

If you own pets

Until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
- Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people and animals.
- Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.

There is a small number of animals around the world reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after having contact with a person with COVID-19. Talk to your veterinarian if your pet gets sick or if you have any concerns about your pet's health.

Protect pets if you are sick

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would with people. Until we know more about this virus, people sick with COVID-19 should **avoid contact with pets and other animals**.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including, petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food or bedding.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

If you are sick with COVID-19 and your pet becomes sick, **do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic yourself**. Call your veterinarian and let them know you have been sick with COVID-19. Some

veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

For more information visit: [What to Do if You are Sick](#).

Stay healthy around animals

In the United States, there is no evidence that animals are playing a significant role in the spread of COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low. However, because all animals can carry germs that can make people sick, it is always a good idea to practice [healthy habits](#) around pets and other animals.

- Wash your hands after handling animals, their food, waste, or supplies.
- Practice good pet hygiene and clean up after pets properly.
- Talk to your veterinarian if you have questions about your pet's health.
- Be aware that [children 5 years of age and younger](#), people with weakened immune systems, and people 65 years of age and older are more likely to get sick from germs some animals can carry.

For more information, visit CDC's [COVID-19 and Animals](#), and [Healthy Pets, Healthy People website](#).

Guidance and Recommendations

- [Interim Guidance for Public Health Professionals Managing People with COVID-19 in Home Care and Isolation Who Have Pets or Other Animals](#)
- [Interim recommendations for intake of companion animals from households where humans with COVID-19 are present](#)
- [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics](#)
- [Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals](#)

Related Resources

- [COVID-19 and Animals FAQs](#)
- [Information on Bringing an Animal into the United States](#)
- [World Organisation for Animal Health: Q&As on COVID-19](#)
- [USDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [FDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [USDA Statement on the Confirmation of COVID-19 Infection in a Tiger in New York](#)