

# COVID-19 AND PETS

## ❖ What causes COVID-19?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a family of RNA (ribonucleic acid) viruses.

CoV infections are common in animals and humans. Some strains of CoV are zoonotic, meaning they can be transmitted between animals and humans, but many strains are not zoonotic.

The CoV which causes COVID-19 has been named as SARS-CoV-2 by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV); this is the scientific name. The virus may also be referred to as “the COVID-19 virus” or “the virus responsible



for COVID-19”. COVID19 refers to the disease caused by the virus.

## ❖ Are animals responsible for COVID-19 in people?

The predominant route of transmission of COVID-19 is from human to human.

## ❖ Can animals be infected with COVID-19 virus?

There is a possibility for some animals, dog (in Honk Kong), cats (in Belgium

and Honk Kong) and tiger (in New York) to become infected through close contact with infected humans.

## ❖ What precautionary measures should be taken when companion animals have close contact with humans?

Currently, there is no evidence that companion animals are playing a significant epidemiological role in this human disease.

### **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CATS AND DOGS WITH COVID-19 ON THE STREETS.**

Without forgetting that your pet animals such as cats and dogs are a member of your family, you should approach your spouse, your children or any individual in your home with the same sense of ownership and responsibility, and you should not leave them on the streets these days when we struggle with COVID-19. Animals and people can sometimes share



diseases (known as zoonotic diseases), If a person inside the household becomes sick, isolate that person from everyone else including pets. When handling and caring for animals, basic hygiene measures should always be implemented. This includes hand washing before and after being around or handling animals, their food or supplies.

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**Practicing good pet hygiene** can help prevent the spread of germs between pets and people. **Virkon S** is a very powerful biosafety disinfectant in good pet hygiene practices. Its effect against 23 virus families that are important for human and animal health, including coronavirus, has been proven.

In addition to hand washing, we can list

**good pet hygiene practices** as follows:

- When returning from the street, cats and dogs paws should be cleaned before entering the house. For this, it can be washed with soapy water or disinfected by adding 5 g of Virkon S to 1 liter of water. Paws must be dried.
- All portable materials such as carrier cages, food & water containers, toys, beds and living areas of your pets should be disinfected. Thus, we eliminate the risk of contamination with the carrier and provide a hygienic environment.
- Also, stray animals should be fed while maintaining social distance. In short, we have to be careful with everything from the outside to the inside.