

Can I get the coronavirus from my pet?

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This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the

lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

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There's no evidence pets are spreading the virus to people.

However, there have been a few cases worldwide where animals likely got the virus from humans, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A 4-year-old tiger tested positive at New York City's Bronx Zoo, and officials think a zookeeper with the virus got the feline sick. Several other lions and tigers have also tested positive at the zoo.

Two house cats in different homes in New York have also contracted the virus, likely from their owners or someone in the neighborhood.

More research is needed to determine how the coronavirus affects animals. The USDA does not recommend routine testing for pets.

If you're sick, avoid your furry companions—just like you would with people. If you're the sole caretaker for an animal, it's best to wash your hands before and after interacting with them.

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