

Good news: No evidence dogs and cats can get coronavirus

17 March 2020, by Nancy Clanton



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It's natural to worry about those you love during a public health scare, and you love your pets.

The good news is that there is no evidence your dog or cat can contract the coronavirus, the World Health Organization said.

The concern arose after a dog in Hong Kong tested "weakly positive" for SARS-CoV-2, the [virus](#) that causes COVID-19.

"The dog has a low-level of infection and it is likely to be a case of human-to-animal transmission," Hong Kong's Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department wrote in a fact sheet recently.

Veterinarians and WHO said the virus might have been in the dog's nose, but that doesn't mean the dog had the coronavirus. The dog belonged to a coronavirus patient.

Shelley Rankin, a microbiologist at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine whose lab is part of the Food and Drug

Administration's Veterinary Laboratory Investigation and Response Network, told ScienceMag.org: "Samples from the Hong Kong dog had a small number of virus particles present. In an animal with no clinical signs of disease, it's hard to say what this means. It was a single case, and we learned that we need to do a lot more research into the potential of the human SARS-CoV-19 virus to infect animals."

Will Sander, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Veterinary Medicine, told Business InOne precaution that does make sense, however, is stocking up on pet food, drinking water, supplies, and any medications along with anything else you'll need during a quarantine. Sander via email: "At this time, people should be minimally concerned about this coronavirus affecting their pets. The virus seems well adapted to spread between people and, therefore, unlikely to jump to [dogs](#) or cats."

WHO's website states that although SARS-CoV was associated with civet cats and MERS-CoV is transmitted by dromedary camels, possible animal sources of COVID-19 have not yet been confirmed.

There are no reports of animals in the U.S. being infected, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta said.

"While this virus seems to have emerged from an animal source, it is now spreading from person-to-person in China," the CDC said. "There is no reason to think that any animals including pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new [coronavirus](#). ... However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around [animals](#)."

This means you can feel free to cuddle up with your dog if you're working from home or pet your cat if it relieves your stress.

One precaution that does make sense, Business Insider wrote, is stocking up on pet food, drinking water, supplies and any medications along with anything else you'll need during a quarantine.

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