

# Blue Ravine News

YOUR PET'S HEALTH IS OUR CONCERN

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## Blue Ravine's COVID-19 Policy and Curbside Care

**It is our priority to provide care for your pets in their time of need while also being diligent and practical with our practice of following recommended CDC measures to keep our staff and our clients as safe as possible.**

The measures we are taking are as follows:

- Constantly monitoring information from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, state, and local agencies to ensure we are following the guidelines set in place by authorities, including updating you on pet care recommendations for their risk and protection.
- Communicating with our staff regarding the importance of adhering to handwashing protocols and preventative measures. Hand sanitizers are on hand and available in all areas of our hospital.
- Enhancing cleaning procedures of common areas including disinfecting frequently but not limited to door handles, chairs, leashes, and counters.
- Requesting our staff to avoid close contact with each other and clients including shaking hands, hugs.
- Providing outside seating for pet owners waiting for appointments during busy times, and supporting clients who elect to wait in their car for their appointment to start. We are asking pet owners with cold symptoms or that have a higher risk of the virus complications to call us from the parking lot and we will help facilitate your pet's care so that you do not need to come into the hospital.
- Making sure to send staff home at first sight of sickness.

We especially want to support our pet owners that may be at higher risk who may need care for their pets but may want to avoid coming into the hospital. Curbside pick-up has become the new norm at Blue Ravine Animal Hospital.

Thanks to this curbside approach, appointments for pets can continue.

To accommodate our clients more efficiently, Blue Ravine has established numbered parking spots outside the hospital so that we can find you easily in our parking area. When you arrive for an appointment (be sure to keep our phone number handy) call us to let us know your parking spot number. A staff member will meet you at your vehicle and take your pet inside for its appointment. If you have ordered food or prescriptions and are picking them up, we will handle payment outside or over the phone and will gladly bring your products to your car.

Thank you for continuing to trust our team with your pets.



### In This Issue:

Blue Ravine's COVID-19 Policy and Curbside Care	1
COVID-19 and Pets: Frequently Asked Questions	2-3
National Pet Week — May 3 to May 9	3
Staying Cool and Safe	4

# COVID-19 and Pets: Frequently Asked Questions

*This document attempts to capture our current understanding of human systemic coronavirus infections as they relate to companion animals and how we might use that information to optimize the health and well-being of companion animals and their owners. The information represents the author's personal opinions based on the available evidence and consultation with peers. The article has been edited for brevity.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are viral diseases common in pets and what has been done to decrease the prevalence of these diseases?

There are many, many viruses that cause disease in dogs and cats. **The vast majority of viruses that infect and cause disease in dogs and cats cannot infect and cause disease in humans.** Examples include feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) (which causes a disease in cats that resembles AIDS), feline leukemia virus, several different feline and canine respiratory viruses, a serious coronavirus infection of cats called feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) virus, canine distemper virus and canine parvovirus. ...(preventive) measures include basic hygiene (hand washing), proper disinfection and quarantine in breeding and boarding kennels, and widespread testing in order to detect the virus as well as immune populations, taking appropriate action should an outbreak of respiratory disease occur.

2. Are dogs and cats commonly susceptible to coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses have been known for decades to be major causes of respiratory, intestinal, or systemic infections of companion animals and livestock. They typically cause disease in very young animals, immunocompromised animals, and populations that are overcrowded or have poor nutrition and hygiene. The main coronaviruses that infect dogs and cats are canine coronavirus, canine respiratory coronavirus, feline enteric coronavirus, and feline infectious peritonitis virus

3. How are coronavirus infections of dogs and cats spread, what signs do they cause, and are there vaccines for these diseases?

- a. Canine enteric coronavirus (also known as canine coronavirus): Most cases of canine enteric coronavirus infection are contracted by oral contact with infected fecal matter that contaminates the environment, which we call fecal-oral transmission. A dog may also become infected by eating from contaminated food bowls or by direct contact with an infected dog. There is a vaccine, but the disease is not widely recognized, and we usually start giving vaccines to puppies at 6-8 weeks of age, so it is controversial and not considered a 'core' vaccine for dogs.

- b. Canine respiratory coronavirus: Canine respiratory coronavirus is transmitted the same way that SARS-CoV2 is transmitted, through respiratory droplet inhalation and fomite spread in crowded environments such as boarding kennels. It is one of the many (MANY) causes of canine infectious respiratory disease complex (also known as 'kennel cough'). There is no vaccine for this infection, but vaccines exist for other causes of CIRDC, like *Bordetella* and canine parainfluenza virus.

- c. The virus that causes FIP is transmitted through the fecal-oral mechanism but is unique in that the virus that is spread, feline enteric coronavirus, is only capable of causing mild diarrhea. In a small proportion of infected cats, the enteric coronavirus can mutate to

a nasty or virulent virus that we call FIP virus. The new virus is capable of spreading throughout immune cells in the body and causing the fatal disease, FIP. That virus is not shed from the body and does not infect other cats through cat to cat contact.

4. What evidence is there that SARS-CoV-2 can infect dogs, cats and other animals?

Historically, there has been evidence of some transmission of human respiratory viruses to dogs and cats. For example, the 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza virus spread to a dog in New York, which developed respiratory signs, and several cats and ferrets became infected, developed respiratory signs and some even died as a result of the infection. While transmission back to humans was not clearly documented for H1N1, in 2016, an H7N2 influenza outbreak occurred in a New York municipal animal shelter in cats and there was some evidence of transmission back to 2 of the 121 workers in the shelter. **Typically, these influenza outbreaks that spill over to dogs and cats quickly die out and ongoing transmission is not maintained.**

5. Can infected pets transmit the disease to people? Should I be taking precautions when handling dogs and cats?

**Currently, we don't have any evidence that dogs and cats, and even ferrets, can transmit SARS-CoV2 to humans outside the laboratory, either as fomites or as virus shedders.** Human outbreaks are driven by person-to-person contact.

Since other infectious diseases can spread between animals and humans (diseases spread from animals to humans are called zoonoses), it is prudent to always exercise good hygiene when people, especially children and the immunocompromised, are around animals. This includes washing your hands (properly) after touching, feeding or cleaning up after your pet, avoiding



*(Continued on page 3)*

## COVID-19 and Pets: Frequently Asked Questions (cont'd.)

rough play (especially between children and animals), and not allowing pets to sleep in the bed with immunocompromised people or lick faces, wounds or healthcare devices.

If pet owners are known to have COVID-19 (i.e. through testing), or highly suspected to have it and are unable to get tested, additional special precautions are warranted. In that case, they should limit contact (ideally have someone else in the household take care of the pet) and wear a face mask. Their pet should be quarantined with them and any signs of illness in their pet should be reported to their veterinarian.

**Critically, it is important that pet owners not over-react and disconnect from their pet. The importance of the human-animal bond and its positive healthcare effects cannot be overestimated.**

### 6. Can I still take my pet to the veterinarian if I am sick?

Self-quarantine is recommended if pet owners are sick. If an animal is sick and needs veterinary attention, owners should call them and tell them that they have or may have COVID-19. This will help the veterinarian's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed. If possible, someone else from the household can take the pet in using suitable precautions as recommended by the veterinarian.

### 7. How can owners prepare their pet for the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Owners that have not had COVID-19 should prepare their pets, just as they prepare their family, for possible future quarantine. This includes stocking up on a 2-4 week supply of food, medications (don't forget prescription medications), litter and other supplies. (The CDC offers additional information.)
- Owners should make sure their pets' medical records, vaccines, and preventative medications (tick, flea, internal parasites) are up to date in the event they cannot care for them and need to board their pet.
- Owners should practice good hygiene during interactions with their pet (e.g., wash hands before and after interacting with their pet; ensure their pet is kept well-groomed and is bathed on a weekly basis; regularly clean their pet's food and water bowls, bedding material, and toys).
- If owners are not ill with COVID-19, they can interact with their pet as they normally would, including walking, feeding, and playing.
- They should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in their home.

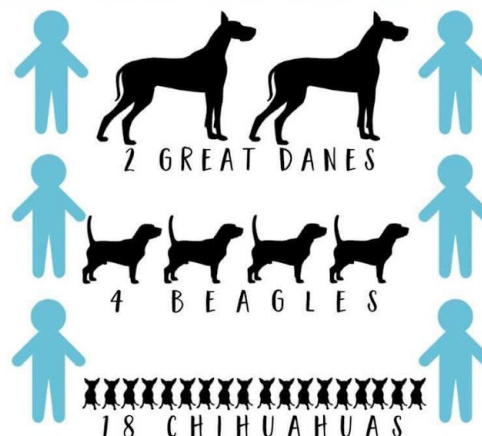
*Biosketch* — Jane E. Sykes BVSc(Hons) PhD: Chief Veterinary Medical Officer, William R. Pritchard Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine

### National Pet Week — May 3 to May 9

National Pet Week is dedicated to celebrating America's more than 200 million pets that enrich our lives each and every day and to encouraging responsible pet care every day of the year. Today's National Pet Week focus is on socialization. Socialization sets the stage for the rest of your pet's lifetime of love and ensures that your pets live the longest, healthiest lives possible. Visit the AKC or other Internet websites to learn more about how you can best socialize your pets and help them learn to enjoy interactions and be comfortable with other animals, people, places and activities.



### Social Distancing Guide FOR DOG PEOPLE



**Staying Cool and Safe** — Most people recognize pets need ample water and shade during hot months. However, every year companion animals lose their lives to heat exposure when they're left unattended in parked vehicles. On a warm day of 85 degrees, temperatures can soar to 104 degrees inside a vehicle within 10 minutes, even if parked in the shade or with partially opened windows.

Elapsed time	Outside Air Temperature (F)					
	70	75	80	85	90	95
0 minutes	70	75	80	85	90	95
10 minutes	89	94	99	104	109	114
20 minutes	99	104	109	114	119	124
30 minutes	104	109	114	119	124	129
40 minutes	108	113	118	123	128	133
50 minutes	111	116	121	126	131	136
60 minutes	113	118	123	128	133	138
> 1 hour	115	120	125	130	135	140

Pets left in vehicles for only a few minutes can suffer from heat exhaustion, heat stroke, brain damage, or even worse, they can die.

The Blue Ravine medical staff encourages pet owners to take precautions during the summer months to decrease the chances of disaster for companion pets:

- Never leave a pet unattended in a parked car, not even “for a minute” or on mild days in spring and fall. Leave pets at home with plenty of water in a non-tip dish.
- Limit pet exercise to cooler hours in the morning or evening since normal body temperature for dogs and cats is higher than for humans. Be especially sensitive to pets who have heavy coats or are older, very young, overweight, or ill as well as those with snub noses who cannot pant efficiently.

- Stay clear of areas that may have been sprayed with insecticides or other chemicals. Ingesting just a small amount of plant food, fertilizers, or insecticides can cause health problems and might even be fatal for your pet.

- Hot weather increases the risk of mosquito, flea, and tick bites, which can be fatal in cats and dogs. Call us for heartworm prevention medication and recommendations for a flea and tick control program.

If your pet shows signs of heatstroke, you must lower its body temperature right away. Move the animal into the shade or an air-conditioned area. Apply ice packs or cold towels to the head, neck, and chest or immerse it in cool, not cold, water. Encourage your pet to drink small amounts of cool water or lick ice cubes, then call your veterinarian immediately.

## BLUE RAVINE OFFICE HOURS

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 8:00 pm; Saturday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.  
For emergencies outside regular office hours, please call MarQueen Pet Emergency & Specialty, 916 757-6600 or Sacramento Veterinary Referral Center, 916 362-3111.

[www.blueravineanimalhospital.com](http://www.blueravineanimalhospital.com)

Blue Ravine would like to **THANK YOU** Animal Hospital thank all our clients for their patience and cooperation in dealing with the new challenges posed by COVID-19 and veterinary care.

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