



WSAVA
Global Veterinary Community



WSAVA

One Health Committee

A One Health Update for WSAVA Members

July 6, 2022

Dear Member Representatives

Since March, 2020, the WSAVA One Health Committee has provided periodic updates concerning the role SARS-CoV-2 plays in the health of companion animals and their owners. They can be found here:

<https://wsava.org/news/highlighted-news/the-new-coronavirus-and-companion-animals-advice-for-wsava-members/>

Going forward, the WSAVA One Health Committee will produce a bi-monthly update that will focus on all current One Health issues that might be of interest to the WSAVA members. We will also issue additional reports as necessary to discuss emerging issues of a time-sensitive nature.

To mark World Zoonoses Day (July 6, 2022), this first edition of the WSAVA One Health Update focuses on SARS-CoV-2 and monkeypox infections as both viruses are shared between animals and man.

SARS-CoV-2

SARS CoV-2 is predominantly a human pathogen that can occasionally infect other species, including cats, dogs, and hamsters. Infected owners can infect their pets (**reverse zoonoses**) and it is recommended that people with known infection isolate from all family members, including their pets. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the likelihood of an infected pet shedding enough virus to infect another human has been considered low. Until recently, the strongest evidence for an animal transmitting SARS-CoV-2 to a human was with mink farmers.

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Larsen HD, Fonager J, Lomholt FK, et al. Preliminary report of an outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 in mink and mink farmers associated with community spread, Denmark, June to November 2020. *Euro Surveill.* 2021 Feb;26(5):2100009. doi: 10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2021.26.5.210009. PMID: 33541485; PMCID: PMC7863232.

Cats are known to be a permissive host for SARS-CoV-2 and **a scoping review of feline associated infections** was published in May, 2022.

Doliff R, Martens P. Cats and SARS-CoV-2: A Scoping Review. Animals (Basel). 2022 May 30;12(11):1413. doi: 10.3390/ani12111413. PMID: 35681877; PMCID: PMC9179433.

This review concluded that reverse zoonotic transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from humans to cats was common, but transmission from infected cats to a human had not been documented. However, shortly after the review was published, a case of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from an owner to their cat to the cat's veterinarian was reported in the July issue of *Emerging Infectious Diseases*.

Sila T, Sunghan J, Laochareonsuk W, et al. Suspected Cat-to-Human Transmission of SARS-CoV-2, Thailand, July-September 2021. *Emerg Infect Dis.* 2022 Jul;28(7):1485-1488. doi: 10.3201/eid2807.212605. Epub 2022 Jun 6. PMID: 35666777.

This case confirms that owners with signs of COVID-19 should isolate from family members, including their pets. Veterinarians should continue to screen owners of clinically ill small companion animals for recent clinical signs of COVID-19. If signs have recently been noted in the owner and temporally associated with acute respiratory or gastrointestinal disease in the pet, appropriate personal protective equipment should be utilized when handling the pet.

Veterinarians should seek guidance from public health organizations concerning testing and handling small companion animals suspected to be infected by SARS-CoV-2. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States maintains recommendations for the handling of small companion animals potentially exposed to people with SARS-CoV-2 infection and is an excellent source of information for veterinarians.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>

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SARS-CoV-2 infection has now been documented in some **wildlife species, including white tailed deer** in parts of the USA.

Hale, V.L., Dennis, P.M., McBride, D.S. et al. SARS-CoV-2 infection in free-ranging white-tailed deer. Nature 602, 481–486 (2022).

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-04353-x>

The role these species and others play in spillback SARS-CoV-2 infections to humans is currently being explored.

The WSAVA One Health Committee recommends following worldwide SARS-CoV-2 case reports in small companion animals on the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) website for the most accurate information of new confirmed cases.

<https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-offer/emergency-and-resilience/covid-19/#ui-id-3>

There are also country specific websites, such as the one maintained by the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** that can be used to track information about new confirmed cases.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/onehealth/one-health-sarscov2-in-animals>

Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a zoonotic poxvirus that primarily infects small mammals, such as rodents and squirrels in Africa. Multiple new human cases are occurring around the world, however, and are believed to be spreading primarily from human to human. The large number of cases has led to concerns that new reservoirs might develop, potentially even in small companion animals. To date, proven cases in dogs and cats have not been reported.

<https://www.science.org/content/article/concern-grows-human-monkeypox-outbreak-will-establish-virus-animals-outside-africa>

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention publishes a situation report, recommendations for travel, and maintains a global map of reported cases in humans.

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<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/world-map.html>

The World Organisation for Animal Health (formerly OIE) also provides recommendations <https://www.woah.org/en/disease/monkeypox/> including that “People who are suspected or confirmed to be infected with monkeypox virus should seek medical attention and avoid close direct contact with animals, including domestic pets, livestock, and other captive animals, as well as wildlife.”

We hope you find this **WSAVA One Health Update** useful.

Please let us know if you have questions or comments.

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