

Vets: Keep cats inside if you're self-isolating amid coronavirus

10 April 2020, by Kiersten Willis



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If you're self-isolating amid the coronavirus pandemic, you ought to help your cat do the same, according to veterinarians.

In a statement Wednesday, the British Veterinary Association said homes where people are self-isolating or those where someone is infected with the coronavirus should keep felines inside, if possible.

"We are not advising that all cats are kept indoors," BVA president Daniella Dos Santos said. "Only cats from infected households or where their owners are self-isolating, and only if the cat is happy to be kept indoors. Some cats cannot stay indoors due to stress-related medical reasons."

Dos Santos added that in all the "tiny number of cases of COVID-19 in [animals](#)," the transmission was likely "human to animal."

"There is no evidence that pets can pass COVID-19 to their owners," she said.

The BVA president also said that while dogs appear not to show symptoms, [cats](#) can.

"It is also the case that animals can act as fomites, as the virus could be their fur in the same way it is on other surfaces, such as tables and doorknobs," Dos Santos said. "That's why our main advice for [pet owners](#) continues to be to practise good hand hygiene."

"It is very important that people don't panic about their pets," she said. "There is no evidence that animals can pass the disease to humans."

The remarks follow a recent report of a Belgian cat testing positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus. Experts said it was an "isolated case" and that the owner had recently traveled to Italy, where the coronavirus death toll reportedly exceeded China's in March.

Additionally, a Malaysian tiger at the Bronx Zoo in New York City reportedly tested positive for the coronavirus in early April.

The tiger is expected to recover, while the cat in Belgium recovered after nine days.

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APA citation: Vets: Keep cats inside if you're self-isolating amid coronavirus (2020, April 10) retrieved 27 May 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-vets-cats-youre-self-isolating-coronavirus.html>

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