



COVID-19

ABCD issues guideline on SARS-coronavirus-2 in cats

April 2020 - The Advisory Board on Cat Diseases has just published a [new guideline in relation to SARS coronavirus-2 \(SARS-CoV-2\)](#), the causative agent of COVID-19. The guideline contains a regularly updated review of available scientific data regarding the role of this virus in cats, its transmission from and to humans and the impact of cats in the current pandemic.

“First of all, we would emphasise that there is currently no evidence that cats transmit SARS-CoV-2 to humans,” stressed Margaret Hosie, ABCD President and Professor of Comparative Virology at the MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research in the UK. The guidelines also provide information on the nature of the virus, recent experimental studies on cats and new data describing the prevalence of infection in cats.

The main conclusions of the guideline for practitioners include:

- There is currently no evidence of cat-to-human transmission.
- Close contact with pet cats should be avoided in households where people are infected with SARS-CoV-2 (or have symptoms of COVID-19) as human-to-cat transmission has been reported.
- If owners with COVID-19 must continue to care for their pet while ill, strict hygiene should be observed.
- Cats from a COVID-19 household should not be rehomed, placed in isolation, relinquished or abandoned.
- Cats should never be disinfected under any circumstances.
- Testing of cats is not recommended at present.

“Our guidelines will be updated regularly as new data become available,” Professor Hosie confirms. “One of our key messages is that pet owners should always maintain good hygiene practices and under no circumstances should cats be abandoned.”

The ABCD website also contains a list of [commonly asked questions on COVID-19 and cats](#).

Notes to Editors

- The European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases (ABCD) is an independent, self-governing and multi-sponsored panel of 14 active members from eleven European countries, with an expertise in immunology, vaccinology and/or feline medicine. The ABCD was set up to compile guidelines for the prevention and management of major feline infectious diseases in Europe, based on current scientific knowledge. For more information, please visit www.abcdcatsvets.org
- Link to the guideline: <http://www.abcdcatsvets.org/sars-coronavirus-2-and-cats/>
- Link to the FAQ: <http://www.abcdcatsvets.org/common-questions-on-covid-19-and-cats/>
- The ABCD gratefully acknowledges the support of Boehringer Ingelheim (the founding sponsor of the ABCD) and Virbac.
- The ABCD currently has 52 guidelines, available at www.abcdcatsvets.org



PRESS RELEASE