

**Dear Summerlin Animal Hospital Families,**

The number one priority at SAH is to protect the health of our clients and staff.

We are actively monitoring and following the guidance of many state and government agencies as it relates to COVID-19. The CDC, WHO, AVMA, OSHA and Florida Department of Health are just a few of the websites we consult regularly to stay as current as we can day to day.

Rest assured our cleaning and sanitizing protocols that have always been in place remain, and we are taking extra time to disinfect commonly touched surfaces even more frequently. We have created distance with our lobby chairs, and in fact are asking clients to move directly into exam rooms upon arrival to keep our common spaces as empty as possible.

To assist in the CDC recommendations of minimizing contact and ensuring public safety, we respectfully ask clients that have recently returned from overseas, feeling sick, coughing, sneezing, awaiting a COVID-19 test result, or have family members that are sick, tested positive for COVID-19 or awaiting a test result to inform us of this status and to request a curb side visit for your pet. Details of this visit are in the notes below.

**At this time, our practice is taking the following measures to help with social distancing while we care for the needs of your pets.**

1. To limit the amount of people entering our lobby, all medication and prescription pick up’s will be “curb side”. ***If you need food or medications for your pet, we request that you call to place your order, please do not walk in.*** When you call ahead you are giving us time to prepare your order, and we are doing our part to keep our social interaction to a minimum. A team member will ask you to please pay over the phone after you place your order, and we’ll ask you to call us when you arrive. We will run your products out to you curbside or in the parking lot.

2. All clients with a traditional in-house visit will be asked to move directly to an exam room. We ask that only those humans that need to attend the visit do so in an effort to keep you and our staff members as close to the 6’ recommended distance from each other as possible. If another client is entering the lobby at the same time another visit is wrapping up, we may complete check out in the exam room rather than at the front desk.

3. Clients that for any reason would like a curb side visit, please request this option when you contact us.

Once you arrive for your appointment, call the front desk from your vehicle (239-454-9160) and let them know that you have arrived.

A veterinary technician will take over to discuss your pet's history, reason for visit, and then will bring your pet inside the clinic. You will be able to stay inside your vehicle.

The veterinarian will call you on your cellphone to discuss your pet's examination, diagnosis, treatment and recommended medications if applicable.

Once the veterinarian has completed your pet's appointment the technician will return to your vehicle with your pet.

Payment can be made over the phone or while in your vehicle.

As always, drop off visits are also available for those clients that cannot, or do not want to wait.

**Coronavirus and your pet's safety:**

The veterinary community is watching this storyline closely, and we will keep you updated. The CDC and World Health Organization have reported that there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19

Do you need to buy masks for their pets? NO. It’s great that people are taking this seriously, but the Surgeon General is telling us that masks are not needed for the healthy population. Only those who have been diagnosed with the virus should wear masks so getting a mask for your healthy pet is not necessary.

According to the CDC, people who are sick with COVID-19 should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just as they would with other people. Those infected should wear an appropriate face mask and wash their hands thoroughly before and after interacting with animals. Avoidance of being kissed or licked by your pet and sharing foods is also recommended.

**Is there a Coronavirus vaccine for pets?**
For many years, veterinarians would vaccinate dogs against a form of intestinal Coronavirus. The Coronavirus vaccine was often included with a combination vaccine like the DAP which protects dogs against Distemper, Parvo and other highly contagious diseases. Although the vaccine is still available, it is not often given due to the very low incidence of the disease. This vaccine is given to prevent **intestinal Coronavirus**– and is not the same as the respiratory Coronavirus that is causing alarm in the medical community. Giving your pet this vaccine will not protect them from a respiratory Coronavirus like COVID-19- and again, there is no evidence that COVID-19 can infect your pet at this time.

Bottom line at this time is that there is very little cause for concern for your pets. That being said, this is a virus that has mutated and has not been seen before. This means we will continue to monitor this situation closely and will update you as necessary.

Please contact us if you have any questions,

Dr. John Ankenbrandt and Your Summerlin Animal Hospital Team

*Because We Love Them Too*



3/18/2020