

# **IMPORTANT COVID-19 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MID-STATE MOBILE VETERINARY CLINIC**

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**(May 1, 2020 UPDATE)**

We hope you are staying safe during this difficult time and wanted to reach out to provide an update regarding our current protocol and services. As veterinarians, we often draw from the same supply as human health care workers do with regards to medical gear such as masks and gloves and also drugs including anesthetics and antibiotics. For this reason, our industry must limit the scope of our normal services in order to preserve supplies in need by the human field, and therefore we must limit our operations to focus on urgent medical concerns as well as certain vaccinations in our patients.

As a temporary measure to assist veterinarians in providing remote care for our patients, the FDA has granted us expanded authorization to provide diagnostic services and prescription dispensation via telemedicine consult. This temporary measure will only apply in certain cases and would require a platform such as Zoom in order to complete a remote exam. We recommend that our clients download the Zoom app on their computers if a remote consultation is desired. The fee for this consultation will vary depending on the length of the consult.

In order to reduce the chance of exposure by entering homes, we require that all examinations are performed inside our mobile clinic, without owners present. We ask that you bring cats outdoors in a carrier and place dogs on leashes when we arrive. We will communicate with you over the phone to discuss any exam findings and answer any questions you may have. Dr. Bianco will call from a restricted line, so please make sure you are able to answer this call, or notify us prior to your appointment if we should make other communication plans. Please help us all to stay as safe as possible by wearing a face covering for all personal interaction with our staff outside your home.

Our clinic and equipment are cleaned thoroughly after each visit using a disinfectant proven to kill coronavirus as well as many other pathogens. Our staff will wear exam gloves when handling your pets at all times.

The best protection against COVID-19 remains to practice good personal health hygiene and to limit our opportunities for transmission. To that end, we kindly request that you contact us to reschedule an appointment at your home if you or another family member has symptoms of cold/flu.

We will be closely monitoring the evolving evidence of positive COVID-19 tests in domestic cats and dogs. Our knowledge on this matter is in the earliest stages and all indications are that the risk of transmission between humans and their pets is extremely low. In rare cases, and only under the guidance of the state DPH, a COVID-19 test for cats and dogs can be performed if the situation warrants this investigation.

We will do our best to keep you informed of any changes to this guidance memo as they occur. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us via phone, email, or text!

For more information about COVID-19 visit the CDC, American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 online resource centers.

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**(March 16, 2020 UPDATE)**

As the risk of COVID-19 in Massachusetts and New England is growing, MSMVC plans for the best way to mitigate this risk for you, our clients as well as for our staff. Our goal is to minimize any disruption in our ability to provide care to our patients in the coming weeks/months.

As a measure of compliance with recent guidelines issued by the AVMA, we will be suspending all nonessential appointments until further notice. At this time, we plan to continue to offer care when it is medically necessary for our patients. We will be available, as usual, via text, email or telephone to discuss issues you may be having with your pet. There will be no interruption with mailing medications as needed by our patients.

In order to reduce the chance of exposure by entering homes we will be requesting that all examinations are performed in our mobile clinic. We can assist you if help is needed to place cats into carriers or to bring dogs and cats out from the home. We will provide the needed services in our clinic and return your pet to your door. We will then contact you via telephone to discuss the health of your pet.

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Below please find FAQ from CDC regarding coronavirus concerns and your pets:

### **Q&A: COVID-19 and Pets**

Can pets get COVID-19 from people?

There has been a preliminary report that a dog in Hong Kong tested weakly positive for the COVID-19 virus. This, however, has not been independently verified. According to the CDC, no animals in the United States have been identified with the virus that causes COVID-19 at this time. However, what we know about COVID-19 is continuously evolving as new evidence and cases emerge. Therefore, though the risk of a person passing COVID-19 to a pet appears to be very low, the CDC advises that pet owners diagnosed with COVID-19 still take precautions.

How do I avoid giving COVID-19 to my pet?

The CDC recommends that people who are sick with COVID-19 restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like they would restrict their contact with other people. When possible, a member of the household other than the individual who is ill should care for any animals in the household. Those infected with COVID-19 should avoid contact with animals, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Those who must care for a pet, or who will be around animals while sick, should wear an appropriate facemask and wash hands thoroughly before and after interacting with those animals.

Can pets get COVID-19 from other pets or spread the disease to other pets?

According to the CDC, there is no evidence at this time that dogs, cats, or other pets can spread COVID-19 to other animals

Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

No, there is no veterinary nor human vaccine available at this time for COVID-19.

For the latest information about COVID-19 visit the CDC, American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 online resource centers.