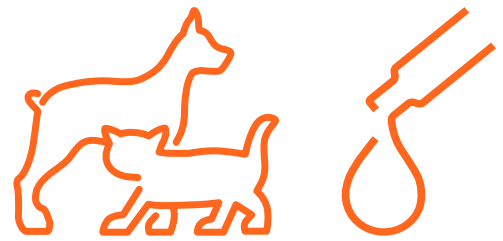


# PCR TESTING TO DETECT SARS-COV-2 IN ANIMALS



Zoetis Reference Laboratories is currently able to perform real-time PCR testing that can be used to detect SARS-CoV-2 in animals. The decision to test an animal should be made together by the local, state and federal public health and animal health officials, and currently the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#), [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) are not recommending routine testing of animals.

We have developed and validated feline and canine specific real-time PCR tests for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) specific RNA. The test does not cross-react with other known feline or canine corona viruses. Due to the emerging information on COVID-19 in cats, we are anticipating a need for testing mostly for this species.

Our recommendation on the process of testing cats is in accordance with the [current USDA guidelines](#) including consulting first with state veterinary health officials.

## The CDC has released [guidelines](#) on SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals, including:

- Routine testing of animals for SARS-CoV-2 is not recommended.
- The decision to test an animal should be agreed upon using a One Health approach between appropriate local, state, and/ or federal public health and animal officials.
- Veterinarians are strongly encouraged to rule out other, more common causes of illness in animals before considering SARS-CoV-2 testing.

## CDC'S CRITERIA TO GUIDE EVALUATION AND LABORATORY TESTING FOR SARS-COV-2 IN ANIMALS

CRITERIA	EPIDEMIOLOGICAL RISK		CLINICAL FEATURES
<b>A</b>	Animal with history of close contact <sup>1</sup> with a person suspected or confirmed COVID-19.	<b>AND</b>	Animal has clinical signs of a new, concerning illness <sup>2</sup> that is suspicious of an infectious disease.
<b>B</b>	Animal with exposure to a known high-risk environment (i.e., where a human outbreak occurred), such as a residence, facility or vessel (e.g., nursing home, prison, cruise ship).		
<b>C</b>	Threatened, endangered or otherwise imperiled/rare animal <sup>3</sup> in a rehabilitation or zoological facility with possible exposure to SARS-CoV-2 through an infected person or animal.	<b>AND</b>	Animal is asymptomatic; OR Animal has clinical signs of a new, concerning illness <sup>2</sup> that is suspicious of an infectious disease.
<b>D</b>	Animals in a mass care or group setting (e.g., animal shelter, boarding facility, animal feeding operation, zoo) including companion animals, livestock, and other species, where their exposure history to people with COVID-19 is unknown.	<b>AND</b>	A cluster of animals show clinical signs of a new, concerning illness <sup>2</sup> that is suspicious of an infectious disease.

<sup>1</sup>Close contact is defined as: Being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while an animal is living with, being petted, snuggled, giving kisses or licks, and/ or sharing food or bedding with a person. Having direct contact with infectious secretions from a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, consuming food or objects contaminated with a human patient's mucous or saliva).

<sup>2</sup>Although the clinical spectrum of illness for this virus remains largely undefined in animals, clinical signs more likely to be compatible with SARS-CoV-2 infection in mammalian animals may include a combination of the following: fever, coughing, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, lethargy, sneezing, nasal discharge, vomiting, diarrhea.

<sup>3</sup>The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) governs an assessment of the status of species ranging from "critically endangered" to "least concern": [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)



# TESTING PROTOCOLS

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1. A unique swab will be used that can be obtained from the lab. Please call your local lab in our Zoetis Reference Laboratories network to request the test kit. Please do not obtain samples for testing with any other swab or request testing of any other sample type.
  2. A veterinarian with PPE must obtain the sample from the deep nasal or pharyngeal regions and then place the swab in the supplied tube that includes a medium which will completely inactivate the virus.
  3. The tube should then be sealed with the supplied cap and wiped externally with disinfectant before placing in a bag with the label (that will come with the kit) identifying the sample.
  4. Return the sample to your local lab.
  5. Expected turn-around time is 2-4 days.
  6. Negative results will be reported directly. All positive results will be reported as presumptive and then sent to the USDA for confirmation per current USDA guidelines. Final results will be reported by the USDA.
  7. Cost at this time will be \$55.
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Please contact your reference laboratory customer service team for additional directions on how to collect the sample so that it is done safely and properly. Contact Information for your Laboratory:

**Ethos Diagnostics Laboratory:** <https://ethosdiagnostics.com/about-us/locations/>

**Phoenix Laboratory:** <https://phoenixlab.com/> or call 800.347.0043

**ZNLabs:** <https://znlabs.com/contact-us/> or call 888.965.9652