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Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (350): USA (TX) animal, cat

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (350): USA (TEXAS) ANIMAL, CAT

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A ProMED-mail post

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<https://www.kbtx.com/2020/08/06/texas-am-research-project-identifies-first-covid-19-positive-cats-in-texas/>

Texas A&M researchers from the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (CVMBBS) have identified 2 cats in Brazos County [where Texas A&M University is located] that tested positive for COVID-19. The team is working to understand how pets living in "high-risk" households may be impacted by COVID-19 by sampling pets, dogs and cats, whose owners have tested positive.

CVMBBS associate professor of epidemiology Dr. Sarah Hamer is leading the team.

"We're one of a few veterinary research groups across the country conducting similar investigations to provide an enhanced understanding about SARS-CoV-2 infections in pets, asking questions such as, Are pets being exposed? Becoming infected? Can they spread the virus to humans or other animals? Do they get sick?" said Hamer in a statement. "It's really exciting that research teams are beginning to respond to the crisis in this way."

Hamer and the researchers work in conjunction with the Brazos County Health Department, which shares information about the project to those who test positive for pet-enrollment purposes. The team has sampled several dozen households across the county so far.

"We have a pretty rigorous testing approach here at A&M. After RNA extraction, the samples have to test positive in 2 different assays with our lab team before being sent to NVSL," Hamer said. "All of our field and lab work has been through multiple approval processes with appropriate organizations in looking out for the animal's and also humans' best interests."

Hamer notes that the study is not designed to test if pets become infected from owners or owners from pets, but it does show that pets can become infected in high-risk households. Hamer also says that the veterinary and scientific consensus still maintains that people shouldn't be afraid if their animals test positive, and there is no indication that infected pets should be surrendered.

"Our goal is to learn more about the different roles that pets may play in the transmission cycle of SARS-CoV-2 and to understand the timing of animal infections in relation to human infections," Hamer said. "We hope that the information will be used to enhance surveillance programs and, ultimately, help protect both human and animal health."

To learn more about the project, visit <http://tx.ag/BCSCovidResearch>.

[Byline: Adrienne DeMoss]

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<[promed@promedmail.org](mailto:promed@promedmail.org)>

[The questions the researcher are posing are important. Thus far, there has been no direct link between cats or dogs passing this virus to humans. Also, the test to determine the virus in cats and/or dogs was not previously developed, so accurate diagnosis and detection of this disease is still getting up to full speed.

However, if you have been exposed to this virus, be cautious around your animals. None of us want our feline/canine friends to be infected. Likewise, we do not know of any transmission from our pets to people, but caution may still be necessary.

So far, the following countries have reported to the OIE (natural) CoV-SARS-2 infections in cats:

Country (Date of event)

Belgium (28 Mar 2020)

USA (22 Apr 2020)

France (2 May 2020)

Spain (11 May 2020)

Germany (13 May 2020)

Russia (26 May 2020)

United Kingdom (28 Jul 2020)

Infections are known to have been identified in some other countries (e.g., China, Netherlands).

#### References

1. Halfmann PJ, Hatta M, Chiba S, et al.: Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in domestic cats. N Engl J Med. 2020 [online ahead of print 13 May 2020]; 383: 592-594. doi: 10.1056/NEJMc2013400; <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2013400>.

2. Shi J, Wen Z, Zhong G, et al.: Susceptibility of ferrets, cats, dogs, and other domesticated animals to SARS-coronavirus 2. Science. 2020; 368(6494): 1016-1020; doi: 10.1126/science.abb7015; <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/368/6494/1016/tab-pdf>. - Mods.TG/AS

HealthMap/ProMED-mail map:

Brazos County, Texas, United States: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=7658191,86551>

## See Also

COVID-19 update (346): USA (LA) animal, dog, conf 20200805.7648734

COVID-19 update (345): animal, cat, research, experimental infection 20200805.7648370

COVID-19 update (340): animal, China, envir monitoring, Netherlands (NB), mink 20200801.7635820

COVID-19 update (334): animal, Netherlands, mink, spread, UK, cat, 1st rep, OIE 20200727.7617582

COVID-19 update (319): Spain (AR) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep 20200717.7584560

COVID-19 update (317): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread 20200716.7578453

COVID-19 update (322): USA (SC) animal, dog 20200719.7588843

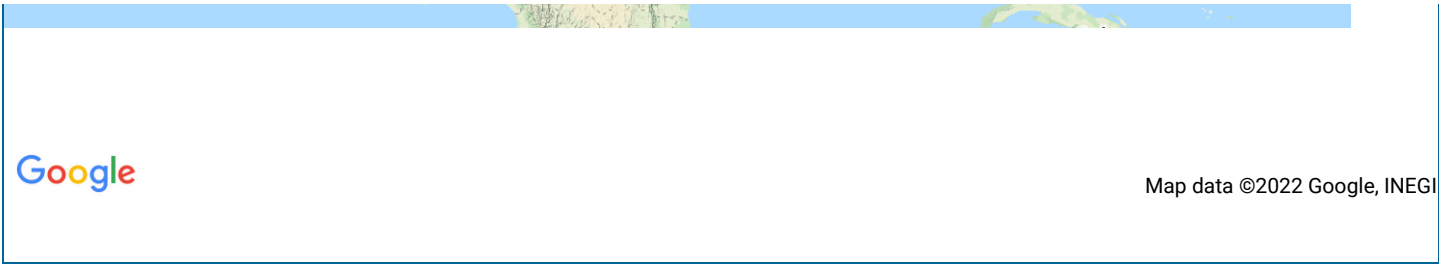
COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission 20200711.7565035

COVID-19 update (308): USA (TX) animal, dog conf 20200708.7554832  
COVID-19 update (299): USA (GA) animal, dog conf 20200703.7535112  
COVID-19 update (284): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, spread, dog 20200624.7506728  
COVID-19 update (281): Netherlands (NB, LI) farmed mink, spread, animal, global 20200623.7502849  
COVID-19 update (280): animal, pangolin, research 20200623.7502805  
COVID-19 update (267): animal, domestic, wild, cat, research 20200617.7480013  
COVID-19 update (266): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep 20200617.7479510  
COVID-19 update (251): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling 20200610.7453845  
COVID-19 update (248): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, mink, spread, culling, cat 20200609.7446478  
COVID-19 update (238): USA (MN) animal, cat 20200605.7429133  
COVID-19 update (236): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling 20200604.7427849  
COVID-19 update (231): USA (NY) animal, dog conf. 20200602.7420541  
COVID-19 update (230): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, control 20200602.7420433  
COVID-19 update (227): animal, cat, dog, research, experimental infection 20200601.7416648  
COVID-19 update (215): Netherlands (NB) animal, mink-to-human, epidem., control 20200527.7385049  
COVID-19 update (212): Russia (Moskva) animal, cat, OIE 20200526.7379578  
COVID-19 update (209): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human, cat, epid 20200525.7375359  
COVID-19 update (198): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human infect susp 20200520.7359976  
COVID-19 update (189): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research, cat, dog 20200517.7344274  
COVID-19 update (183): Japan/USA, animal, research, cat, experimental infection 20200514.7337185  
COVID-19 update (181): Germany (BY), France (AC), cat, OIE animal case definition 20200513.7332909  
COVID-19 update (177): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, Spain (CT) cat susp 20200512.732858  
COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment 20200511.7323845  
COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread, rabbit susp 20200509.7316646  
COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research 20200503.7294846  
COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology 20200501.7286113  
COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests 20200430.7284183  
COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification, RFI 20200430.7281768  
COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal 20200428.7275765  
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink 20200427.7272289  
COVID-19 update (130): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, new cases 20200425.7266556  
COVID-19 update (124): USA (NY) animal, cat, lion, OIE 20200423.7259119  
COVID-19 update (123): USA (NY) animal, cat, conf 20200422.7256272  
COVID-19 update (113): USA (NY) cat, animal, susp, RFI 20200418.7240811  
COVID-19 update (88): Germany, animal, research, pig, chicken, bat, ferret 20200407.7196506  
COVID-19 update (85): USA (NY) animal, tiger, OIE 20200406.7191480

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