

Burnhamthorpe Animal Hospital

COVID-19

Dear valued client,

March 17, 2020

Burnhamthorpe Animal Hospital (BAH) recognizes that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) is creating a great deal of stress and anxiety, both personally and professionally. There are growing concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19 in Canada; these are unusual and challenging times for everyone. As of the date of printing this notice, the Public Health Agency of Canada has determined the risk associated with COVID-19 to be low for the general population. However, this assessment could change rapidly. As a result, we would like to inform you of the preventive actions put in place at BAH, which are in line with the governments' commitment to rapidly adopt measures to stop the spread of the virus. We are implementing these steps and recommendations as we are dedicated to providing you with the same great service and care you have come to expect from our hospital, while taking measures to keep our clients, our team members and the pets we care for healthy and safe.

What we are doing at BAH

While we always adhere to strict Infection Control Protocols to keep our hospital clean and disinfected, we have increased both the frequency and scope of these cleanings in order to help ensure our patients, clients and team are kept safe. Similarly, hand washing hygiene is always critically important in a hospital setting, a step we continue to emphasize to staff and clients.

Additionally:

- Restricting access to our hospital to those with symptoms of COVID-19, fever, who have travelled to an affected area or outside of Canada or have been in contact with an infected person or have tested positive themselves
- Providing hand sanitizer in our reception area
- Minimizing any shared, unnecessary items (such as magazines and brochures)
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces throughout the day
- Cleaning and disinfecting exam rooms and equipment after each appointment
- Ensuring that our team members are washing their hands frequently throughout the day and between clients
- Implementing social distancing practices; history taking at a distance and pets will be examined in our treatment area with a veterinarian and team member

If you are well and NOT in quarantine

If your pet is sick and in need of medical attention or scheduled for routine care or procedures, we are open and fully operational. However, we recommend you follow these simple steps:

- While in the waiting area, maintain distance between you and other clients and pets
- After checking in at the reception, you are welcome to wait in your car. We will optionally text or call you when we are ready to see your pet.
- Limit the number of people who accompany each pet to the hospital
- If you need to pick up food or medications for your pet, please call and we can arrange to have them brought out to your vehicle or have prescriptions shipped directly to your home
- Use a hand sanitizer or the exam room sink and soap to wash your hands.
- If you are worried about entering public places, call us from outside when you arrive at the hospital for your appointment so that we can let you know when an exam room is available and we can escort you directly there with your pet

If you are ill, exposed, positive and/or in quarantine

*In order to help us continue to serve pets in need, we ask that clients who have recently travelled (within 14 days) to a high-risk country or outside of Canada, had any exposure to symptomatic or confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, or confirmed positive themselves **NOT** bring their pets to the hospital unless they are having a medical emergency.* If you are in this category and your pet is due for routine care (annual exams, vaccines, dental cleanings, nail trims or any other non-urgent care), please call us to reschedule to a later date. If, for medical reasons, your appointment is necessary, we ask that you have a healthy family member or friend bring your pet to the clinic. If this is not possible, we ask that you call ahead to arrange for your arrival at the hospital. Upon arrival, call us from the parking lot and we will retrieve your pet from you 'curbside' in the parking lot to prevent entry into the clinic.

What you can do for your pets and your family:

It is possible that the supply chain logistics may be impacted in the coming weeks so it is important to ensure you have enough supplies for your pets including: food, treats, litter, medications and prescriptions etc. for a reasonable time period (2 months is suggested). We have already been informed from our supplier that there will likely be delays in our delivery times of 3-5 days (vs our typical turn-around time of 24 hours). If you need to refill any medications or prescription diet foods,

please call the clinic to place your order. We can also arrange for your pets medications to be mailed directly to your home if you prefer not to, or are unable to, come into the clinic.

Also, do remember that we have our online Webstore that can be accessed through our website www.burnhamthorpeanimalhospital.com where we offer home delivery of pet food and pet supplies.

E-mail and Text Messaging are another means of communication with us. You can send and receive e-mails, texts and photos with our hospital during operating hours.

The good news is that at this time, there is no evidence that any animal or pet can infect humans with the new Coronavirus. Additionally, no animals to date have been reported to be sick with COVID-19.

However, because this is a new virus and information is still being collected, as a precaution, restrict contact with our pets if you are diagnosed with COVID-19. If this is not possible, practice good hygiene and wash your hands before and after touching your pet and try to avoid close contact.

There is so much information out there

The most reliable sources of information as this develops are the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization and other public health agencies. We will be following their lead to determine the safest course of action for everyone who enters our hospital.

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#animals>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

We will keep you updated with any new information as we have it. We appreciate you trusting the care of your beloved pets to us and are committed to keeping you and your pets healthy and safe.

Please follow us on Facebook where we will continue to share information about COVID-19 and the impact it may have on you and your pets.

Sincerest regards on behalf of myself, and our entire veterinary health care team at Burnhamthorpe Animal Hospital

Dr. Tracey L. Bourdeau