



COVID-19 mythbusting series

When should we test an animal for COVID-19?

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Availability of testing for COVID-19 has significantly changed over the past few months, both for humans and for animals. Thankfully there are now several options in the UK for getting animals tested for the presence of the virus. The Animal and Plant Health Agency have issued a set of guidelines for which animals can be tested for diagnostic purposes. Firstly, only canids, felids and mustelids may be tested. Secondly, the animal must be showing clinical signs of disease, either respiratory, gastrointestinal symptoms or fever. Thirdly, the most likely causes of these symptoms should have been investigated and ruled out. Finally, it is advised that the animal must have had contact with a human that has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 3 weeks. If a positive result for the virus is obtained, it is important to be aware that it is your professional obligation to report this to the office of the chief veterinary officer. This supports the UK's reporting obligations for international animal health. A very small number of COVID-19 positive animals have been identified in other European countries, and as of July 2020, only a single COVID-19 positive cat has been reported in the UK.

For more free COVID-19 resources for veterinary professionals, visit rcvsknowledge.org/covid-19



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