**DEAR CLIENTS AND FAMILY,**

At [HOSPITAL], we are doing everything we can to stay available to our patients and clients. It is our priority to try to keep our community and pets healthy. As the coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread globally, we are taking appropriate precautions to address the outbreak by following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Our current approach and response to COVID-19 are outlined below.

**WHAT IS COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is caused by a member of the coronavirus family, and it first appeared in late 2019 in Wuhan, China. Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, runny nose, cough and breathing trouble. While most people experience mild symptoms, some may develop more severe symptoms, which can be fatal.

COVID-19 is believed to be spread only person to person, which means that infection can occur through close contact with infected individuals. Although it is believed that COVID-19 is most contagious when an infected individual is most symptomatic, an individual may still be contagious without exhibiting any symptoms.

**PREVENTION TIPS**

According to the CDC, the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to avoid it. [HOSPITAL] team members are doing our part to prevent the spread by practicing good hygiene at work and at home:

* Regularly washing hands for at least 20 seconds throughout the day, and after every patient, with warm water and soap, specifically before eating. This is done more frequently than normal.
* Covering coughs and sneezes.
* Avoiding making close contact with others, such as shaking hands. Additionally, everyone should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
* We are frequently cleaning and disinfecting commonly used surfaces (countertops, keyboards, doorknobs, faucets, and stethoscopes).

*\*You will be informed if you were in contact with a team member that becomes diagnosed with COVID-19*

To help you remain healthy, we encourage you to use hand sanitizer at the front desk. We have limited amounts of sanitizing supplies and will continue to restock as we are able. For additional guidance on maintaining your health, see the CDC’s webpage on prevention and treatment.

**YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH**

If you have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, you should self-quarantine or seek medical attention as stated by the CDC. Please *refrain from entering* our offices if:

* You have a fever, cough, or are sneezing or
* You have flu-like symptoms or
* You have exposure to people or locations with documented COVID-19 cases in the past three weeks.

To protect the health of you and our team, please consider a Telemedicine visit to talk with one of our veterinarians from home. Call us to learn more.

**WHAT DOES COVID-19 MEAN FOR MY PET?**

Your pet is not at risk for being infected with COVID-19. The CDC has reported no COVID-19 cases in pets in the USA. The Hong Kong weak positive dog case has no symptoms and the test cannot distinguish samples with intact viruses from fragments of the RNA. It is possible that dogs, like all objects, may be a location to find the virus. For example, “The World Health Organization is encouraging the use of digital payment options because the COVID-19 virus is thought to survive on hard surfaces like coins for days.” Other sources say, “Infectious disease experts in human and animal health organizations agree there is no evidence at this point to indicate that pets can spread COVID-19 to other animals, including humans.”

Do not abandon your pets out of fear of contracting COVID-19 from them or infecting them with COVID- 19. Practice basic hygiene. Wash your hands with soap and water after handling or walking your pets. If you’d like to take extra precaution, you can wipe down your pets with disposable baby wipes after their walks. Contact us if you need further advice.

Should our offices be forced to temporarily closed as an absolute worst case, we will always have someone able to come in to take care of boarding and/or hospitalized pets.

**WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREPARE FOR MY PET’S CARE?**

We know that some of you may end up quarantined or stuck at home sick. We still want to help you the best we can. Some choices are as follows:

* Identify another person who is willing and able to transport your pet to our office. With notice, we will meet them in the parking lot. This will become a drop-off appointment.
* We will offer parking lot pick up of your pet for his/her exam, while you remain in your vehicle.
* We request that you call the hospital (phone #) at the time of your arrival so that our technician staff can get the initial information regarding the reason for your pet’s visit. The Technician will then retrieve your pet from your car, and we’ll perform a physical exam in the hospital. The doctor will call you at that time to discuss any findings and the plan moving forward. Once the exam is complete, we will process payment over the phone. The Technician will bring your pet back to the car for you along with your receipt.
* We will continue to fill prescriptions and ask that you plan ahead when needing refills. Please allow 3-5 days advanced notice for refill needs.
* We can arrange to deliver needed food/medications to your door by utilizing our online store, Vetsource. A link can be found on our website (ABCvet.com) as well as our App.

Given this is a rapidly developing situation, we will continue to monitor developments and update our course of action as new information becomes available through the CDC. We know it’s a stressful time, but please believe that your pets are safe and that you are safe around your pets. We appreciate your patience as we all learn to work with these new changes and hope to return to normal operating procedures soon. If you have any more questions, we’re here to help!

Please follow us on social media for additional updates!

Stay healthy,  
[PRACTICE OWNER]