



Internal Email to employees about Coronavirus COVID-19

Good Afternoon MHS Team,

March 6, 2020

As information surrounding coronavirus continues to develop, it is important that we stay updated on the facts. As a part of an organizational task force looking at the potential impact of the virus on our organization, Dr. Robert Fisher developed the message below. Included is information about COVID 19 that may have some of our guests and customers confused and a reminder of some best practices. We are committed to keeping you updated with the latest information.

We have also attached a disaster planning checklist for pet owners for you to share with any interested customers.

Here are helpful links from the CDC and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

<https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus>

First of all, to be clear, there are many different viruses in the “corona” family, these viruses are so grouped as they are morphologically similar.

The particular virus that has spread nearly worldwide affecting **people** that has been widely publicized is the COVID-19 virus. Although it is suspected that this virus originated from animals, “At this time, experts have not expressed concern about transmission to or from animals. Multiple international health organizations have indicated that **pets and other domestic animals are not considered at risk for contracting COVID-19. No animals in the United States have been identified with the virus, and there is no evidence that dogs or other pets can contract or spread COVID-19**”.

The COVID-19 virus should not be confused with the other corona viruses that we encounter at MHS which include

1. Canine Corona Virus – This is a gastrointestinal disease, common symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, fever, anorexia, and lethargy. A vaccine exists for this disease but is generally not recommended unless there is a high-risk factor for an animal.
2. Canine Respiratory Coronavirus- This is one of the agents that is often incriminated in Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease (or kennel cough)- It can produce the typical signs of upper respiratory tract disease and is often found in concert with other infectious agents producing CIRDC. There is no vaccine
3. Feline Enteric Coronavirus- This is the agent that can produce Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP). This is generally a fatal infection, there is no longer a vaccine available.

None of these viral diseases are zoonotic (transferable to people)

In addition to the information relayed to staff on preventing human transmission of the COVID-19 a couple additional points should be employed. This also applies to animal to animal transmission of the other diseases (coronaviruses).

- a. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. The disinfectants used at MHS are effective at inactivating the virus.
- b. Hand washing or hand sanitizer- The in and out rule should be employed- Disinfect before entering an exam room (or handling an animal) and after leaving an exam room (or handling an animal)
- c. Employ universal precautions