

Importance of One Health for COVID-19 and Future Pandemics

Media Statement

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Contact: [Media Relations](#)

(404) 639-3286

Today marks the sixth annual [One Health Day](#), a global campaign that highlights the need for a One Health approach to address shared health threats by recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, and our environment. This approach is more important than ever as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus that causes COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, is a zoonotic virus, which means it can spread between people and animals. As more animals are reported infected with the COVID-19 virus, it becomes increasingly clear that a One Health approach is crucial to address new disease threats that affect both people and animals.

More than [400 animals from 29 countries](#) [↗](#) have been reported infected, including nearly [300 animals in the United States](#) [↗](#), as well as thousands of mink in mink farms in the U.S. and abroad. The virus has infected companion, wildlife, zoo and production animals, including cats, dogs, tigers, lions, gorillas, white-tailed deer, mink, and others. Most of these animals became infected after contact with people who had COVID-19. Although animals do not appear to play a significant role in the spread of the virus among people currently, One Health investigations and animal surveillance are crucial in evaluating transmission of SARS-CoV-2 between people and animals. This will increase our understanding about the range of animals that can be infected and the risks of potential establishment of new hosts and reservoirs where the virus could hide, mutate, and potentially re-emerge as a new variant in the human population. CDC's One Health Office is working to support One Health activities and to improve coordination across sectors. To complement existing public health reporting systems, CDC developed surveillance and reporting infrastructure to help local, state and federal partners capture important laboratory and epidemiologic data on cases of SARS-CoV-2 in animals linked with people with COVID-19.

One of the lessons learned from COVID-19 is that emerging zoonotic infectious diseases are here to stay and fighting new disease threats such as COVID-19, Ebola, and Zika requires One Health collaboration across human, animal, and environmental health organizations. More information about animals and COVID-19 can be found on CDC's [website](#) and more information about CDC's One Health work is available on the [One Health page](#).

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[U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES](#) [↗](#)

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