Myth Bustin’ Mondays

4/20/2020

Today we are looking into 3 statements about COVID -19 transmission.

Statement #1: COVID-19 can be Transmitted by Mosquitoes. This is a myth. At this time, CDC has no data to suggest that this new coronavirus (COVID-19) or other similar coronaviruses are spread by mosquitoes or ticks. The main way that COVID-19 spreads is from person to person.

Statement #2: COVID-19 can live on pet’s fur. This is a myth. The virus survives best on smooth surfaces. Porous materials, such as pet fur, tend to absorb and trap pathogens, making it harder to contract them through touch. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID19animals), there is no scientific evidence indicating that any animals in the United States, including pets, can spread COVID-19 or that they might be a source of infection in the United States. The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories has confirmed SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans) in one tiger at a zoo in New York. This is the first instance of a tiger being infected with COVID-19. Samples from this tiger were taken and tested after several lions and tigers at the zoo showed symptoms of respiratory illness.  Public health officials believe these large cats became sick after being exposed to a zoo employee who was actively shedding virus. The zoo has been closed to the public since mid-March, and the first tiger began showing signs of sickness on March 27. All of these large cats are expected to recover. There is no evidence that other animals in other areas of the zoo are showing symptoms.

USDA and CDC are monitoring the situation and working to support the state and local health departments and state animal health officials. State animal and public health officials will take the lead in making determinations about whether animals, either at this zoo or in other areas, should be tested for the SARS-CoV-2 virus. USDA will notify the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) of this finding.

Anyone sick with COVID-19 should restrict contact with animals, out of an abundance of caution including pets, during their illness, just as they would with other people. Although there have not been reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. If a sick person must care for a pet or be around animals, they should wash their hands before and after the interaction.

No evidence currently exists to suggest that the hair on our heads and bodies may be modes of COVID-19 transmission. Continuing regular, daily hygiene habits (including showering and washing your hair) will rid your hair of any contaminants, similar to using proper handwashing techniques.”

Statement #3: COVID-19 can live on surfaces for 2-3 days. This is a fact. The virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is stable in aerosols for up to 3 hours, and on surfaces like copper (4 hours), cardboard (24 hours), and up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel. The ability of the virus to remain on these surfaces varies under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature, or humidity of the environment). If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

For more myth busting about COVID-19 go to https://www.uaex.edu/life-skills-wellness/health/covid19/mythbusting.aspx