



WORK INVOLVING SAVSNET RESEARCHERS

EVIDENCE OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-COV-2 IN CATS AND DOGS FROM HOUSEHOLDS IN ITALY

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1



SARS-COV-2

SARS-CoV-2 originated in animals and is now easily transmitted between people.

2



ANIMAL INFECTION

SARS-CoV-2 emerged from animals and is now widely transmitted between people. Field and experimental observations suggest some animals (cats, ferrets and dogs) could be infected by their carers.

3



STUDY

Here we report a large-scale study to assess SARS-CoV-2 infection in 919 companion animals living in northern Italy, sampled at a time of frequent human infection.

4



ANTIBODIES

No animals tested PCR positive. However, 3.3% of dogs and 5.8% of cats had measurable SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody titers. Dogs from COVID-19 positive households were significantly more likely to test positive.

5



TRANSMISSION

Infections of pet animals are unlikely to have much consequence to humans. However, animal-to-human transmission may be more likely in animal population densities that are high. As testing becomes more accessible, surveillance of those pets most at risk may be advocated.

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THANK YOU

We are particularly proud of SAVSNET's Research Technician Dr Shirley Bonner for being involved in this work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and would also like to thank Dogs Trust for funding Shirley's involvement through SAVSNet-Agile.