

BULLETIN OF THE

PET PRACTITIONERS ASSOCIATION OF MUMBAI.

(For Circulation amongst PPAM Members)



Editorial

COVID-19 Effect: A Blend of Trials and Prospects.

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The present Covid-19 pandemic is a challenge to the world. All around there is a gloomy scenario due to the outbreak. Let us turn negativity into positivity and we all will be amazed at what we can do. It has provided a chance for veterinarians to test their resilience on professional endurance. The ongoing COVID-19 calamity serves as a notice of the opportunities we have missed in our journey in the last few decades, and a chance we now have to change course. And to look at innovative ways to serve our beloved pets.

All of us are trying to find our way out through this difficult time. There is always a way to turn this around. It's often in the toughest time that we learn to refine new skills. Struggle shapes character. Often the moments in our life we are most proud of are the ones when we overcame adversity to achieve something meaningful. Don't expect miracles overnight, even though this might happen.

None of us feel inspired every day, so don't be too hard on yourself or your current situation. And it's up for us to learn how to steer through this situation if we want to keep moving forward in our profession. We all are passionate about our vocation and it is the key to success. The professional world is more cut-throat than ever before, with more skills available to be learned and understood than at any other point in antiquity. Having transferable skills can be a gift and a curse and those who do not advance will be left.

In the current situation let us try to do a few things outside our comfort zone. If we succeed then we appreciate we can do it and if we flop then there is a lot to learn along the way. There are



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plenty of options to learn new and exciting skills. Working from home has become a new obstacle for many. As professionals adjust to the new standard of working remotely, let us swiftly learn how to improve communication and collaboration in a virtual setting. The time to act is now. Skills gaps will only grow and further debilitate us unless actions are taken. When we all look back at our life, it's the struggles that have made who we are today. Let us turn distress into an advantage. Let us confront our limitations and figure out how to rise above them.

Asking for help can be a sign of strength and courage. We should not be fearful to look for help in a variety of ways to help cope with a tough situation. Let us overcome the challenge by associating with people who are way cleverer and better than us at their piece work, and then believing their proficiency and insight. By letting go of more things and handover those things to people who are infinitely more capable, Then the right people turn challenges into success. Let us surround ourselves with believers in the solution, not the technology.

Timing is key. Sometimes the tough choices are the best. The road to victory is filled with tons of unexpected diversions, and navigating it requires precise focus. There are plenty of options to learn new and exciting skills. The time to act is now skill gaps will only grow and further debilitate us unless actions are taken.

While the economic effect of the COVID-19 outbreak will be obvious in months to come, it has provided a chance for veterinarians to be more resilient and innovative.

This is the time for veterinarians in power to take a leadership position and provide legal, regulatory, scientific and financial support to promote research in biomedical fields including viruses in the environment and animal kingdom.

India needs to focus on affordable, quality and innovative healthcare infrastructure and environmental conservation that is accessible to every living being, yes animals included.

Let us all bond so that it pushes us to the limits and beyond until we realize that we are capable of far more than we ever imagined. People remember how adversity was handled, not how it occurred. Recognize the situation exists, regardless of how we feel about it. Be prepared to face the situation head-on so we can get through it. Even if we can't change the situation, acknowledging it can help us accept it and move on. Let us develop a plan.

Let us all brainstorm potential ways to deal with the situation. We are likely to have more options than we all might think. Let us spend time talking to each other on how we can together respond to a hard-hitting situation. Even if we can't fix it, we can develop a strategy to cope with it. Usually, something good can come out of even the worst situations. Focus on what we might gain for having endured a tough situation. Perhaps we will come out of it a stronger person or maybe we all have learned a valuable life lesson.

This, too, shall pass. We are only as strong as we feel. Human beings aren't the only ones at our disposal. Prayer and meditation are the wellsprings of spirituality. Both take commitment and dedication, but nothing works unless we take into account that trust is power; we all need to know in our heart of hearts that we all are being heard and helped and loved by a power greater than all of use.

Prayers do receive answers, but we need to listen carefully and have confidence in the answer. God doesn't shout; He whispers. And in his whispers is the way.

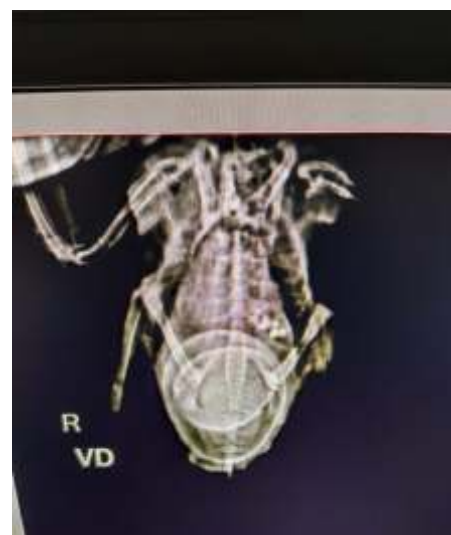
Egg Bound Syndrome along with double-shelled egg in a cockatiel

Dr. Archana Bapat

The cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*), also known as weiro bird, or quarrion. Cockatiel is one of the most popular companion birds, this slender Australian parrot can be both cuddly and bold. Cockatiels can also be curious and, at times, feisty.

A female cockatiel was presented in clinic, with a swelling noticed by the owner around the cloaca. On history taking, the bird has been laying eggs for the past week.

On examination, it looked like a case of egg-binding with a huge size egg. An egg binding-bird appeared to have a swollen stomach and swelling around her bottom from straining to pass an egg. Other symptom of illness was fluffed-up feathers. Most of the time the bird tended to sit on the cage floor. Egg binding is a serious problem that requires quick attention. It was confirmed with radiographs, which showed a double egg.



WHAT CAUSES A DOUBLE-SHELL? If pet birds lay a super big egg, it likely contains another egg inside. Such an egg is called a double egg or a double-shell egg and is the result of a reverse peristalsis contraction.

How an Egg Is Laid: To understand how this happens, we need to know how an egg normally develops inside a bird. A bird's single functioning ovary, located at the top of the oviduct, contains undeveloped yolks. The yolks mature one by one, at intervals.

As each yolk matures, the ovary releases it into the oviduct, where it begins its journey toward becoming an egg. On the way through the oviduct, the yolk gets enveloped in egg white, then encased within a membrane, and finally surrounded by a hard shell.

The developing egg is pushed along the oviduct by peristalsis — the involuntary contraction and relaxation of the oviduct's muscles.

How a Double-Shell Egg Occurs: Sometimes a second mature yolk releases before the currently developing egg is laid. The contraction resulting from the release of this second yolk can cause the developing egg to reverse course. The reversed egg joins up with the newly forming egg, and the two become encased together within a second shell. The outer shell contains a normal yolk and albumen plus a second fully formed egg, shell and all. In this x ray you can see what an egg inside of an egg looks like.

A young bird is likely to lay double-shell eggs while her reproductive system gets organized. A bird can lay a tiny egg containing no yolk.

A rare case of double-shell eggs and its treatment and management in a pet cockatiel is recorded in this article.

Federation of Small Animal Practitioners Association of India GUIDELINES on COVID 19 for Companion Animal Practice

This interim guidance is for veterinarians and their staff, (as Member of the Member Associations of FSAPAI) who are treating companion animals (Dogs & Cats) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The intent of this guideline is to facilitate preparedness and to ensure companion Animal practices in place in a Clinics/Hospitals to help people and animals to stay safe and healthy. Since it is a rapidly evolving situation FSAPAI will update this guidance as needed, and as additional information becomes available.

1. At the time of release of this guidelines, there are no confirmed reports of pets (Dogs & Cats) carrying or transmitting COVID-19 to other animals or humans. There is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
2. However, since 2-3 animals belonging to feline family has shown the incidence although as reverse zoonosis, as reported, it is advised to be more careful while handling the Catpatients.
3. Besides ensuring all precautions of Disinfecting all possible surfaces in the clinic with appropriate chemical at least twice a day, Hand Sanitizers, Masks, Gloves, frequent washing of hands between two patients etc in the clinic, you are advised to maintain an optimum distance with Pet Owner. Provide Mask if owner is not wearing.
4. Surfaces in the clinic/hospital that are touched frequently, such as tables, keyboards, doorknobs, shelves, stethoscopes, trays and any other should be cleaned often and wiped down with disposable wipes between cleanings at least twice a day. (High touch points should be cleaned by mopping with 1% hypochlorite solution. In case of metallic surfaces where bleach is not suitable 70% alcohol should be used).
5. OPD: Best pre-cautions is not to attend more than 1-2 cases at a time, others can wait in their Car or outside the clinic. In the waiting/reception area Chairs should be placed reasonably apart and use of A.C should be restricted.

6. The pet owner should be advised to restrict his or her contact with the pet and other animals if they are having even the mildest signs of bad cold, cough and flu like symptoms. No harm in telling this to the owner and asking while fixing the appointment on phone or on arrival if they have come in contact with anybody from abroad.
7. Any pet brought to the clinic with the history or showing symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal signs, should be tested for common pathogens and conditions that are more likely to have caused such clinical signs thru what ever diagnostic laboratory test the Veterinarian feels deem fit.
8. If the results of tests for more common pathogens and conditions are negative, you should talk to the owner and contact the local public health or animal health official for information about how to proceed.
9. Tele-Medicine can be an excellent alternative option to support good patient care and avoid rush in the clinic while also helping to prevent person-to-person spread (client to clinic/hospital staff). You are advised to adopt and apply any method suitable to your practice to reduce the patient rush in your clinic/hospital. Postpone elective procedures, surgeries, and non-urgent visits to your clinic/Hospital.
10. Billing & Payments: Preferably Use digital payment mode.
11. Aprons – Overalls: disposable overall gowns, caps, masks and gloves should e used by everybody in the clinic/hospital while attending to the pet patients.
13. Upon arriving home from the hospital–leaving the shoes outside, changing the dress and taking shower before interacting with family members etc.
14. Non-essential services and elective surgical procedures which will not cause undue risk to an animal’s current or future health canbe postponed by explaining the facts to the pet parents.

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Federation of Small Animal Practitioners Association of India Advisory for Pet Parents to be followed by the Clinic/Hospital

1. Till date there is no evidence that pet animals, especially Dogs & Cats play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to animals and humans.
2. Currently, there is no evidence that this virus can spread to people from the skin or fur of companion animals.
3. Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
4. Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet from other people and animals.
5. Avoid dog parks or public places where large numbers of people and dogs gather.
6. Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other people or animals.
7. Practice good pet hygiene and clean up their paws properly.
8. Treat pets as you would other human family members – do not let pets as well as human family members interact with people or animals outside the household.
9. Avoid any interaction of your pets with strangers/frequent flyers.

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Veterinary Clinical Practice in the times of COVID

Dr. Sangeeta Vengsarkar Shah



These are strange times. Never in the recent history of the world have people needed to adopt so quickly to a new normal. As vets, we too quickly adapted, each trying to deal with the situation in his/ her own way. Each one of us faced varying emotions- ranging from anxiety, fear, anger, irritation, boredom, happiness at being able to spend time with family, to a final resigned acceptance. The virus has brought the whole world to its knees, but other illnesses prevail, and we as Vets need to continue to work since we have taken the Veterinarians oath and have a lifelong obligation to serve our patients.

The University of WhatsApp has sent several messages instilling fear in the minds of pet parents, and animal social workers are flooded with rehoming requests and abandoned pets. What is our role in all of this? I believe we as a profession need to take a considered and cautious view of the situation and disseminate information only from reliable sources, since we are at the forefront of knowledge. We are able to go through sensational messages and ask relevant questions- which tests were done? Which kits were used? Where was the study documented? Which strain of the virus was discovered? Was the viral load significant? Only when we have satisfactory answers to all these questions, should we disseminate information. Till then we all know how to exercise caution- infectious diseases and zoonoses are not new to us, we have known how to deal with it all our lives as Vets.

Some relevant information about COVID/ Coronavirus:

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that range from the common cold to Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)/ SARS. About 20 percent of colds are the result of a human coronavirus. Animal species have their own coronaviruses that cause a variety of illnesses. The dog, cat, pig, and cattle coronaviruses are very common and do not cause illness in people.

SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19, can infect some animals under certain conditions. Other human viruses like H1N1 influenza and SARS-CoV-1, which is very similar to SARS-CoV-2, have also spread

from people to animals in low numbers, most notably in cats, ferrets, and pigs.

However, there is no evidence to suggest that a naturally infected animal is capable of transmitting infection back to humans.

As far as pets are concerned, so far 2 cats and one dog have tested positive for SARS COV 2/ COVID. They were all in close contact with a COVID positive family member. On the other hand, thousands of pets who were tested for SARS COV2 were negative according to AVMA.

It is possible that additional cases will be identified in pets in the days and weeks to come. But the risk of pets developing illness from SARS-CoV-2 remains incredibly low. This risk can be reduced even further by treating our pets as we would any other member of our family.

If you have to give one piece of advice to pet parents it should be this:

Until more is known about this virus, if you are ill with COVID-19 you should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just as you would restrict your contact with other people.

COVID-19 is spread from person to person; the risk to animals is very low and the risk from animals is even lower. There is no reason to harm wildlife or abandon a pet out of fear.

In fact, in the U.S., more people are fostering or adopting cats and dogs during the pandemic. The relationship with a pet can be a great source of comfort, helping to decrease depression, anxiety, and stress.

Practice management in times of COVID:

We Veterinarians have several challenges to face in these testing times. Triageing a patient while maintaining social distancing, managing staff shortages, dealing with shortages due to break in supply chains, protecting your team, all these are new

challenges which force us to come up with out of the box solutions. How do we keep afloat when patient load has dropped? How do we keep abreast with latest information? Fortunately, several webinars are now available, and we all must make use of our free time and attend these webinars. (Though there is nothing like meeting veterinary colleagues in person, who knows when that will happen?)

There are many questions that need answers, and we should step up as a community, initiate dialogue and

come up with solutions that will help us and our profession grow and improve.

PPAM as well as FSAPAI are continuously monitoring the situation and will release timely updates to Veterinarians.

The need of the hour is to take due precautions, avoid unnecessary fear and try to deal with the current situation calmly, for this too shall pass.

Let us understand what the various world organizations are advising Veterinarians

1) US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others cause illness in certain types of animals.

- Some coronaviruses that infect animals can sometimes be spread to people, but this is rare.
- We do not know the exact source of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The first infections were thought to be linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now primarily spreading from person to person.
- At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.
- We are still learning about this virus, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations.

2) The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Paris, France.

● Are animals responsible for COVID-19 in people?

The predominant route of transmission of COVID-19 is from human to human.

Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from an animal source. Genetic sequence data reveals that SARS-CoV-2 is a close relative of

other CoV found circulating in *Rhinolophus* bat (Horseshoe Bat) populations. However, to date, there is not enough scientific evidence to identify the source of SARS-CoV-2 or to explain the original route of transmission to humans (which may have involved an intermediate host).

Investigations are needed to find the source, to determine how the virus entered the human population, and establish the potential role of an animal reservoir in this disease.

● Can animals be infected with SARS-CoV-2?

Now that SARS-CoV-2 infections are widely distributed in the human population, there is a possibility for some animals to become infected through close contact with infected humans. Infection of animals with SARS-CoV-2 virus may have implications for animal health and welfare, for wildlife conservation, and for biomedical research.

Dogs, cats (domestic cats and a tiger), and minks have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 in the field setting, following close contact with infected humans (or humans suspected to be infected with SARS-CoV-2).

Studies are underway to better understand the susceptibility of different animal species to SARS-CoV-2 and to assess infection dynamics in susceptible animal species. To date, preliminary findings from studies suggest that poultry and pigs are not susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Preliminary findings from laboratory studies suggest that, of the animal species investigated so far, cats are the most susceptible species for SARS-

CoV-2, and cats can be affected with clinical disease. In the laboratory setting cats were able to transmit infection to other cats. Ferrets appear to be susceptible to infection but appear to be less affected by clinical disease. In the laboratory setting ferrets were also able to transmit infection to other ferrets. Ferrets might serve as a useful model for future studies e.g. to evaluate vaccines or therapeutics. Dogs appear to be susceptible to infection but appear to be less affected than ferrets or cats. Egyptian fruit bats were also infected in the laboratory setting but did not show signs of disease. The fruit bats did appear to be able to transmit infection to other fruit bats.

The current spread of COVID-19 is a result of human to human transmission. To date, there is no evidence that companion animals play a significant a role in spreading the disease. Therefore, there is no justification in taking measures against companion animals which may compromise their welfare.

- **What precautionary measures should be taken when companion or other animals have close contact with humans suspected or confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2?**

Currently, there is no evidence that animals are playing a significant epidemiological role in the spread of human infections with SARS-CoV-2. However, because animals and people can sometimes share diseases (known as zoonotic diseases), it is still recommended that people who are suspected or confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 limit contact with animals.

When handling and caring for all animals, basic hygiene measures should always be implemented. This includes hand washing before and after being around or handling animals, their food, or supplies, as well as avoiding kissing, being licked by animals, or sharing food.

People who are suspected or confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 should minimise close direct contact with animals, including farm animals, zoo animals, other captive animals, and wildlife; particularly species which have demonstrated to be susceptible to infection with SARS-CoV-2. As good practice, appropriate and effective biosecurity measures should always be practiced when people have contact with groups of animals e.g. on farms, at zoos, and in animal shelters.

When possible, people who are infected with SARS-CoV-2 should avoid close contact with their pets and have another member of their household care for their animals. If they must look after their pets, they should maintain good hygiene practices and wear a face mask if possible. Animals belonging to owners infected with SARS-CoV-2 should be kept indoors as much as possible and contact with those pets should be avoided as much as possible.

3) American Veterinary Medical Association.

- Animal owners without symptoms of COVID-19 should continue to practice good hygiene during interactions with animals. This includes washing hands before and after such interactions and when handling animal food, waste, or supplies.
- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
- Keep cats indoors, when possible, to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet from other people and animals. Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.
- Until more is known about the virus, those ill with COVID-19 should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just as you would restrict your contact with other people. Have another member of your household or business take care of feeding and otherwise caring for any animals, including pets. If you have a service animal or you must care for your animals, including pets, then wear a cloth face covering; don't share food, kiss, or hug them, and wash your hands before and after any contact with them.
- At this point in time, there is no evidence to suggest that domestic animals, including pets and livestock, that may be incidentally infected by humans play a role in the spread of COVID-19.
- Routine testing of animals for SARS-CoV-2 is NOT recommended.
- Human outbreaks are driven by person-to-person transmission. Accordingly, we see no reason to remove pets from homes even if COVID-19 has been identified in members of the household, unless there is risk that the pet itself is not able to be cared for appropriately.

Highlights of PPAM Annual Day Event.

Held on Sunday, 16th February 2020, at Peninsula Grand Hotel, Sakinaka Junction, Andheri (E), Mumbai.

The event also included Interactive Session on Wound Management in Strays Dogs and Cats by Dr Makarand Chavan , MVSc (Gynaecology).



Important News

A) PPAM donates Rs. 35000/- for purchase and feeding of horses in Matheran.



Matheran and Karjat team with Dr. Subash Mhaske DDCAH, and Dr. Arle DAHO, Raigad.

B) Dr. Makarand Chavan receives the IDA award.



Note of Caution: Information in this issue of PPAM bulletin are scientific in nature and meant for information of Veterinary doctors only.