

## SAFETY PROTOCOLS

### **FOR ALL VISITS:**

**We are performing a sanitary wipe down of the patient's fur.** We are using a very safe, gentle product that we commonly use for general cleansing and flushing of wounds called Vetericyn, or a waterless shampoo product or fragrance free wet wipe. ***Be aware, you should not use chemical wet wipe products commonly used for human hand clean-up on pets.***

There is no evidence that dogs get sick from the virus or transmit it to humans and we only know of two dogs that tested positive for the virus in Hong Kong, two domestic cats (one in Belgium, one in Hong Kong), and one tiger at the Bronx zoo. Thousands of dogs have been tested negative for the virus by a veterinary laboratory during testing for respiratory diseases and we are not seeing reports of dogs getting sick from COVID thus far. It still may be possible that viral particles can be carried on the surface of fur like other surfaces for periods of time. The significance of fur as a source of contact exposure is unknown at this time but is thought to be very low risk. Since more studies are needed for us to know, and we do not have this information at this time, we are taking this wide precaution to further decrease any risk. It is recommended to wash your hands after handling animals, their toys or food/water bowls and to keep them clean and bathed. If you are affected by COVID or have symptoms of illness, you should try to have someone else care for your pet at this time or please keep your pet indoors. You do not need to have your pet tested for COVID as this will not change what you do with your pet.

**We are as usual, washing hands in between each patient.**

**We are sanitizing the rooms and any equipment used in between each patient.**

**We are wearing masks and gloves.**

**We are wearing lab coats, gowns or scrubs as an extra protective barrier and changing lab coats or scrubs in between patients. The garments are disinfected in a sanitary wash.**

**We are utilizing a disinfecting foot bath when stepping back into our facility.**

**The outside pen and each carrier or crate is sanitized in between each patient.**

**We provide a freshly laundered sanitized towel, blanket or disposable potty pad for each pet.**

**We are continuing physical distancing amongst all staff members and when we are not in-clinic, we are complying with the stay-at-home orders.**

**If any staff member experiences symptoms of COVID or if they have known exposure to anyone that has COVID or symptoms of COVID or if they wish to stay home at this time, they are asked to stay home.** We are all thankfully healthy at this time and hope you are too!

**\* Please let us know if you or your pet has been exposed to a person with known COVID infection or symptoms of COVID-19 so we can further guide you on a plan for your pet.**

**Current reported symptoms of COVID-19:** *(please talk to your medical doctor for questions regarding your own health)*

**Common:**

Cough

Fever

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Flu-like symptoms

Body/muscle aches

Extreme Fatigue

Weakness

Chills

Stomach issues, Diarrhea

Nausea

**Less common:**

Loss of appetite

Sore throat

Loss of smell or taste

Sniffles, nasal congestion

Lightheaded, Dizziness

Increased confusion

Nasal congestion

Malaise

Headache

Inflammation of the eyes, "Pink Eye"/Conjunctivitis: red puffy eyes *(not officially noted yet as a common symptom but has been recently reported as well as a small study published regarding this)*

***Some people do not have symptoms for a few days and may be contagious before showing symptoms.***

## **FOR NEW PATIENTS/INITIAL CONSULTS:**

**We are holding on seeing new patients until after April 20, 2020.** Current appointments for consults that had been scheduled will be contacted and given preferential re-scheduling for after 4/20/20 but we will request you drop-off your pet for this visit at this time. "Virtual visits" can be made available via video chat or conferencing while your pet is here with us. We will keep you posted if we need to extend this period longer which will depend on what we are seeing with the pandemic curve. If you are currently waiting to be seen for an initial consults with us and your pet needs care at this time, we will ask you see or consult with your pet's primary care doctor or referring veterinarian.

## **FOR RECHECK EVALUATIONS:**

We are holding on seeing recheck evaluations at this time **which require the use of an assistant or if you would like to be physically present for the visit.** In most cases, a recheck evaluation can be performed without an assistant but we will require you to drop-off your pet while you wait outside during the visit. The doctor will call or email you after the visit or we can arrange a "virtual visit" video call (*depending on Internet availability*) during the visit. Patients that are due for recheck evaluations will be given preferential re-scheduling for after 4/20/20. We will keep you posted if we need to extend this period further which will depend on what we are seeing with the pandemic curve.

**When in doubt about whether your pet should be seen, please contact us and the doctor will advise you.**

**If you have any questions or concerns or if your pet is having any "flare-ups", you should schedule an in-clinic Minor Recheck with the doctor** (15 minute appointment) so that the doctor may evaluate your pet and communicate with you via phone or email.

In some cases, for current patients, we may offer Tele-medicine video chat visits if the doctor feels they can assist in advising you via this method. *A Tele-medicine fee will apply which is based on the doctor's time. Please be aware there are limitations regarding the use of Telemedicine in evaluating patients and this may not replace the need for the patient needing to be seen depending on the condition or your pet's response to any recommendations given.*

**Your pet can still continue to come in for treatments and rehabilitation therapy sessions with the same frequency of visits until the recheck evaluation.** We will let you know if we recommend any decrease or increase in frequency of visits depending on how we feel your pet is responding at the time of their visits and what you report in terms of progress at home. We can still give visit updates as usual over the phone at the time of pick-up and discharge as usual.

## **ACUPUNCTURE VISITS:**

**Most of our patients tolerate needling well but in some cases, depending on the doctor's discretion, we may be modifying acupuncture needle treatments by performing laser light**

**stimulation of points using a focused beam of infrared laser light instead of needling. This is a safe, well-tolerated alternative to needle treatments.**

This will decrease the doctor's need for an assistant or muzzle but will require more of the doctor's time and their need to wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and sanitize equipment. There is no increase in pricing at this time (ie. the acupuncture fee will remain unchanged).

*Laser acupuncture will not be performed if the patient is not a candidate for laser or if you had previously declined laser therapy treatments.*

### **ACUPUNCTURE INJECTIONS:**

**Most of our patients have been tolerating Aqua-puncture injections well. If the doctor needs an assistant for Aqua-puncture injections, we will be holding on these types of injections for the next two weeks.**

Or you have the **option for us to continue to give the injections while the patient has a muzzle on for the injections-** we would otherwise like to avoid muzzling if it is not necessary or if your pet stresses with a muzzle on. We do associate muzzles with treats and use one that your pet can pant in while on and allows them to be able to take treats.

We will make this change for the duration of the program and any pre-paid credit for any injections that have not been given will be used for continuing programs or refunded.

**\*Other injections such as Adequan may still be scheduled and given.**

**For DISCHARGE and CHECK-OUT: Once the exam or pre-approved treatments have been performed, one of our receptionists will call you for payment over the phone or if you prefer, you may request a card be kept on file in our secure password protected and security encrypted system to be used. A receipt will be emailed to you.**

When you have arrived to pick up your pet after the visit, you may give us a call or we will call you sooner to discharge your pet in a similar manner to drop-off. Our doctors or doctor's assistants are able to call or email you after the pet's session to give you an update or to address any questions you may have. For new clients, we will arrange for the doctor to call or video chat with you after the examination. We can also arrange a virtual tour of our facility if you wish.

### **For MEDICATION and REFILL PICK-UPS & SHIPPING:**

Please call at least 24-48 hours in advance for refills. When you arrive to pick up a refill or new prescription, please call us at (818) 847-7299 and a doctor's assistant will deposit the medication on top of the outside crate while you remain at least 6 ft away from the pen. We will discuss the instructions over

the phone and send any written counseling instructions. *We may also arrange medications to be shipped. Shipping or service fees may apply.* An **On-line pharmacy** is coming soon to our website.

#### **PAW REHAB PHARMACY and RETAIL:**

You have the option of using an online or outside pharmacy if you prefer but we greatly appreciate your support of using our pharmacy and retail at this time. Aside from helping us cover our increased overhead expenses, this helps with:

- 1) You being able to conveniently take the items home for use the same day avoiding shipping delays so your pet can benefit faster.
- 2) Shipping costs may be avoided: in some cases shipping costs may actually make the item more costly than online purchasing.
- 3) Trusted Source: Our items are coming either directly from the manufacturer or an approved distributor of the manufacturer we have an association with and regularly use which are more trusted than third party vendors.

If we do not carry the item or have it in stock, we do have drop shipping available direct to you through our distributor or we can ship in-clinic items. We can conveniently prescribe any out of stock items using this method. We have available in-clinic: doctor recommended supplements, medication, incontinence care items, assistive harnesses or slings and behavioral aids for your convenience.

**We will let you know when our online pharmacy is available.**

We are happy to direct you to trusted websites to get more info on a product **but, we can not make specific recommendations for which online pharmacies to use or specific companies to purchase from that we do not have an association with.**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS & REMAINING SOCIAL AT THIS TIME:**

**For TELE-COMMUNICATIONS: Tele-communications** may be arranged in order to connect with our established clients and patients. We can offer communication by appointment through phone, video chat or conferencing and email. If you are interested in this service, please call us at (818) 847-7299 or email us at [info@pawrehab.com](mailto:info@pawrehab.com) for details and scheduling. *A fee will apply based on the doctors time.* New patients will still need to have an initial examination in-clinic prior to these communications beyond general common questions but, we will still ask that the client drop-off their pet for the visit so the pet may physically be evaluated before specific advice is discussed.

*Please be aware there are limitations regarding the use of Telemedicine in evaluating patients and this may not replace the need for the patient needing to be seen depending on the condition or your pet's response to any recommendations given.*

We apologize for any inconvenience. Please know that we are trying to make the best decisions to accommodate our patients needs and to keep everyone safe at this time. We appreciate your cooperation and patience. Please contact us at [info@pawrehab.com](mailto:info@pawrehab.com) or call us at (818) 847-7299 if you have any questions.

Be well and thank you!

**Your PAW REHAB family**