



COVID-19 Mythbusting series

What's the difference between Feline Coronavirus and SARS-Coronavirus-2?

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What's the difference between Feline Coronavirus and SARS-Coronavirus-2? Well, to start off with, they are both Coronaviruses and they have important features in common. Here I'm going to highlight the fact they are enveloped and they have an RNA genome, which means that they can mutate very quickly and that they are very fragile, which means biosecurity and hand washing are important parts of control.

When we look at their genetics, however, these are very, very different viruses. They're only 63% similar, and that similarity is mostly limited to just one quarter of the genome. We can represent that another way on a phylogenetic tree, which shows SARS-Coronavirus-2 here and Feline Coronavirus here. And they're about as far apart as they can be while still be considered coronaviruses.

What does that mean for us? Well, it means that diagnostic tests, both viruses are really unlikely to cross react, that's a good thing. Does it mean that SARS-Coronavirus-2 can't infect cats? No, it doesn't. That is really important. SARS-Coronavirus-2 can infect cats, probably rarely. And it is the subject of another COVID-19 mythbusting presentation.

For more free COVID-19 resources for veterinary professionals, visit rcvsknowledge.org/covid-19



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