

Pandemic Pets Post Quarantine: How to Help Your Furry Friend Adjust
By Veterinarian Leigh Hofmeister, Author of the Blog, [My Vet and Me](#)

Pandemic pets have been entering homes by the day! Over the past few months of quarantine and social distancing, many families have made the decision to bring a new pet into their home. It has been remarkable to see shelters across the country empty as people are eager to adopt a new family member. Pets serve as a form of stress and anxiety relief for humans. The human-animal bond is unique, and I have witnessed the importance of such a connection during quarantine. The presence of our pets has the ability to calm our nerves almost instantly and provide unmatched companionship. Now our country is beginning to open up and many family members are preparing to return to work and (eventually) school. What happens to our pandemic pets when the routine of their stay-at-home family shifts to the complete opposite? Through these months of transition, we cannot lose sight of our pet's point of view and we must maintain a consistent routine, provide plenty of exercise and socialization, as well as consider our pet's health and wellbeing.

The weather is warming up, restaurants are offering al fresco dining – some even have indoor dining options, and it *almost* seems like the quarantine never happened. But as we transition back to working outside of the home, we need to consider our pets. Even if you did not adopt a new pet during the past few months, your current pets have still experienced a big change. Some pets deal with change and have no problems, but many others develop separation anxiety, cats begin urinating outside of their litterboxes, and puppies chew your house to bits! With all of the new puppies and kittens acquired over the past few months, it has been important to talk with the families about developing a consistent routine similar to what life was like pre-coronavirus. It is important that puppies, dogs, cats, and kittens are getting daily exercise. As the weather is warming up, set your alarm 30-60 minutes earlier than normal so you can get up and take your dog for a nice long walk, run, or bike ride. Play fetch in the yard while you drink your cup of coffee or tea. Get out the laser pointer and catnip and have a play date with your kitten! This way your pet gets some exercise and is hopefully a little tired before you leave for the day. Puppies should be kept in their crate for a few hours each day alone in the home. Maybe you take a walk, eat lunch in your backyard, or sit on the porch for your afternoon conference call. But you must be away from the house so that your pet understands this is the time when you are at work. Whether you have a puppy or a 12-year-old dog, they should be alone in the home for a stretch of time (similar to you being at the office or in class) each day. You might not have gotten the chance to implement a routine over the past month or so, but you can start now! Leaving your pet alone for small increments of time and increasing that amount each day will really help. Making sure your pet has had a good amount of exercise and a healthy meal will help too! If it is too challenging to exercise and socialize your dog in combination with the transition back to work, there are many daycares open and available for half day or full day options to care for your fur baby!

In addition to maintaining a routine and providing exercise for your pet, now is a good time to schedule a check-up with your family veterinarian. Veterinarians have seen a lot of new pets the past few months, but many families who adopted a pet have been apprehensive about

going anywhere for a check-up. Also, many veterinary clinics were open only for life threatening situations and were not accepting new patients. Now is the time to call and get your new pet scheduled! And if you did not adopt a new pet, it is a good time to have your dog or cat seen for a check-up. We have all spent more time outdoors in the past few months than we normally would have, and we've brought our pets along. Our pets love being outdoors especially when they are with us, but increased time outdoors exposes our pets to external parasites like fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes and the diseases these parasites transmit. Provecta Advanced for Dogs is a product that not only kills, but also repels fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes. You might be someone who normally starts applying flea and tick prevention in April or May and as such you have run out and now your dog is overdue. Or maybe you haven't been using anything to protect your pet for external parasites because they spent most of their time indoors, but that has changed during the coronavirus quarantine. Whatever the reason may be, now is the perfect time to call your family veterinarian and have your pet checked out. Mention Provecta Advanced for dogs and talk with your veterinarian to see what product they would recommend. Enjoy this transition and make sure your pet is safe and protected!