

## **HOW TO RECOGNIZE A SICK RABBIT?**

He can stop eating suddenly or progressively in 2 to 7 days. He starts by not eating pellets anymore, then vegetables, then hay and lastly treats. He can show the following signs when he is in pain: **not moving, not interacting with you, passes small or no stool, grinding teeth, digging, arched back.**

### **MY RABBIT HAS BIG UNFORMED STOOL:**

Due to the consumption of very little indigestible fibers that lead to the intestinal transit slowing down and impaction or colon clog.

### **MY RABBIT HAS SOFT STOOLS AND DIARRHEA:**

**Young rabbit:** think of enterotoxaemia, mucoid enteritis, E. coli, Tyzzer disease, coronavirus, rotavirus, rabbit hemorrhagic virus, coccidia, cryptosporidiosis

**Prevention:** Isolate and treat diseases, give a balanced diet: Unlimited hay, vegetables, 1/3 cup of pellets and unlimited water, introduce new food progressively, do not change diet suddenly.

**Adult rabbit:** Disruption of the intestinal flora because of an unbalanced diet, stress, antibiotics, a tumor and sometimes genetics factors are incriminated.

**Prevention:** Give a balanced diet: Unlimited hay, vegetables, 1/3 cup of pellets, unlimited water, no sudden diet change.

### **RESPIRATORY:**

#### **Nasal and eye discharge, respiratory difficulty and sneezing**

**Possible causes:** Dental disease, rhinitis, sinusitis, pneumonia, tumor and lung metastasis.

**Prevention:** Use non-dusty cage bedding, prevent dental problems by giving unlimited good quality hay and give exercise.

### **REPRODUCTIVE:**

#### **Blood in urine, whitish or brownish purulent vaginal secretion**

**Possible causes:** Infection, tumors and uterus polyps. Endometrial hyperplasia.

**Prevention:** Spay female (Ovario-hysterectomy) around 6 to 9 months or before 2 years old.

### **URINARY**

#### **Difficulty urinating, red urine, crystal secretion thickened urine.**

**Possible causes:** Crystal in the bladder, calculus in urethra, bladder, kidneys or ureter.

**Prevention:** Give a balanced diet, timothy hay, unlimited water and give small quantities of broccoli.

**RED URINE WITHOUT DIFFICULTY URINATING:**

**Possible causes:** Porphyrin pigment, if the rabbit is not showing any other signs of disease, there is no reason to worry, it will go away in 3 to 4 days.

**KIDNEYS:**

**Drinking and urinating a lot** and emaciation and eating less

**Possible causes:** Kidney insufficiency due to renal calculus, infection, tumor, renal cysts, hypervitaminosis D and intoxication to medicine like gentamycin.

**SKIN:**

**Redness, crust, scabs, hair loss, mass, scratching**

**Possible causes:** Dermatitis in folds, sebaceous gland inflammation, parasites like lice, fleas, mites, myiasis, abscess, tumor, ringworm and even some viruses.

**Prevention:** Avoid aggressiveness between rabbits (neutering males, spaying females), get every new rabbit examined by a veterinarian, good cage hygiene, good balanced diet, examine anal region to see if there is any local infection or if the rabbit has retained stool in his anus.

**NEUROLOGICAL:**

**Tilted head, nystagmus, ataxia, rolling, and convulsion**

**Possible causes:** *Young rabbits:* Encephalitozoonosis: Zoonosis

*Adult rabbits:* Encephalitozoonosis and internal otitis, complication of pasteurellosis.

**Back leg paralysis:**

**Possible causes:** Trauma on spine, inadequate contention and back fragility despite adequate contention.

**Weakness and limping from back legs, unable to jump, standing abnormally:**

**Possible causes:** Bone and vertebra degenerative disease.

**Convulsion, weariness, vision loss, intestinal stasis**

**Possible causes:** Lead intoxication, heat stroke, brain tumor.

**CARDIAC:** Fast breathing, respiratory difficulty, syncope, weight loss

**Possible causes:** Cardiac disease.

**TUMORS:** Disease signs are vague like not eating, stasis, diarrhea, constipation, respiratory difficulty, exophthalmia (protruding eyes) etc.