

Glen Mills Veterinary Hospital
1785 Wilmington Pike
Glen Mills, PA 19342
Tel: (610) 558-0100 Fax: (610) 558-0102
Email: info@gmveterinary.com

COMMON ILLNESSES IN FERRETS

Disclaimer: If your ferret shows any signs of the symptoms listed, schedule an appointment with one of our exotic doctors as soon as possible. The veterinarian is the only person authorized to make a diagnosis and the appropriate measures have to be taken accordingly.

INSULINOMA

This is a common disease that often occurs at the same time as adrenal disease. The term “insulinoma” refers to the pancreas, usually pertaining to a tumor on the pancreas.

Clinical signs in ferrets vary. The most common symptoms include lethargy, weakness, difficulty walking, drooling, pawing at the mouth, weight loss, rear leg incoordination, collapse, seizures, and vomiting.

For more information, talk to your veterinarian at your next visit.

ADRENAL DISEASE

This is another common disease that develops in ferrets. Typically, adrenal disease manifests as hyper adrenal disease, where hormone levels increase, as opposed to the opposite where the levels decrease. It's usually developed from a combination of factors.

The most common sign of adrenal disease is hair loss. More serious signs include enlarged vaginal labia in females and difficulty with urinating in males.

OTHER ILLNESSES

Ferrets are susceptible to human influenza and cold viruses in humans in addition to distemper and rabies. If you have a cold or the flu, it's important to wash your hands before and after handling your ferret, as well as keeping him or her away from your face.

Other examples of common illnesses or diseases in ferrets are insulinoma and adrenal disease as mentioned above, as well as cardiomyopathy, Aleutian disease, bronchial pneumonia and other viral infections.

Ferrets have sweat glands like us but their thick fur prevents them from cooling down in that way which makes them susceptible to heat stroke and dehydration. Ferrets should be kept indoors on hot days with lots of water always.

INTESTINAL OBSTRUCTIONS

Foreign body obstructions cause many premature deaths among ferrets. Since they are mischievous and love to chew rubber or small objects, swallowing things and becoming blocked is a very serious issue that usually needs to be fixed surgically.

Signs of an intestinal blockage are lethargy, problems passing stool, passing a thin and mucousy stool, inappetence, and vomiting after eating.