

## Signs of a Sick Parrot



### Avian Veterinarians in the Fargo Area

Dr. Teri-Lee James, Two Rivers Veterinary, 3306 Sheyenne St, Suite 200, West Fargo, ND - 701.356.5588

Dr. Kevin Dill, Animal Health Clinic, 1441 South University Drive, Fargo, ND - 701.237.9310

Red River Animal Emergency Clinic, 1401 Oak Manor Avenue, Fargo, ND - 701.478-9299

<b>Change in Behavior:</b> Make mental notes about your bird's normal activity, personality, and behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Abrupt personality change</li> <li>→Decrease/increase in normal activity</li> <li>→Unusual irritability/moodiness</li> <li>→Biting from normally tame bird</li> <li>→Sudden increased tameness</li> <li>→Unusual fear or phobic reactions</li> <li>→Decrease or increase in noise level</li> <li>→Talkers stop talking</li> </ul>
<b>Droppings:</b> Notice your bird's normal droppings and the way different foods will change them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Change in consistency of droppings not related to diet</li> <li>→Decrease or increase in volume or number</li> <li>→Color change not related to diet</li> <li>→Undigested seed or food matter</li> <li>→Matted feathers around vent</li> <li>→Straining, labored breathing or difficulty in passing waste</li> <li>→Smelly droppings</li> </ul>
<b>Lumps, Bumps, Sores, Swelling:</b> When you handle your bird, get into the habit of checking wings, body, head, and legs for changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Swelling on face, around eyes, cere</li> <li>→Any sores</li> </ul>
<b>Accidents and Injuries:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Dazed, loss of balance</li> <li>→Bleeding</li> <li>→Any minor cut, scratch, or abrasion should be carefully watched for infection</li> <li>→Wing drooping or misalignment</li> <li>→Refusal to stand on one leg/foot</li> <li>→Bone protruding or bent wrong</li> <li>→Constant "bothering" of an area</li> </ul>
<b>Breathing:</b> Normal breathing should be relaxed and barely noticeable. Note:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Labored breathing</li> <li>→Continued rapid breathing</li> <li>→Decreased exercise tolerance</li> <li>→Wheezing, whistling, or abnormal sounds</li> <li>→Increased tail "pumping" with respiratory effort</li> <li>→Blocked nostrils and airways</li> </ul>
<b>Seek Avian Veterinarian Help:</b> Get references from trusted sources and establish a relationship with a COMPETENT avian vet before an illness or emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→Chances are that if you suspect your bird is sick - it is!</li> <li>→Consult immediately with a competent avian vet</li> <li>→<i>Not all veterinarians who say they treat birds are qualified</i></li> <li>→<u>Do not</u> use over-the-counter medicines sold in pet shops - you may make it worse or mask the real problem</li> <li>→The longer you wait - the harder the problem may be to solve</li> </ul>

## When to be Concerned

<b>Eyes:</b> Notice the normal brightness and sparkle of a healthy bird's eyes.	→Dull, lifeless eyes →Half-closed eyes when bird is not sleeping or napping →Puffiness, swelling, redness →Excessive tearing or discharge →Opaque milky appearance →Frequent and prolonged kicking of eyes with foot or rubbing of eye on cage or perch
<b>Feather change:</b> Notice the healthy bird's normally smooth, bright, clean feathers.	→Dark blotches or lines in feathers or abnormal coloring →Decrease in preening activity →Ratty feathers not caused by play →Drab feathers/loss of feather sheen →Excessive feather loss/bald spots →Bird picking/chewing feathers in an area can mean injury or skin irritation →Deformed, misshapen feathers
<b>Posture and Movement:</b> Notice your bird's normal activity level and postures.	→Sitting low on perch →Sitting with feet further apart →Head drooping →Constant fluffed feathers →Constant shivering →Frequent loss of balance →Non-behavioral head weaving →Inability to perch →Staying on bottom of cage →Seizure symptoms
<b>Food and Water Consumption:</b> Pay attention to your bird's normal appetite and drinking habits.	→Appetite or food decrease or increase →May not eat even favorite foods →Water increase or decrease →Non-behavioral regurgitation →Sick birds do not always lose their appetite. Some very sick birds die with a full crop.
<b>Breathing:</b> Normal breathing should be relaxed and barely noticeable.	→Labored breathing →Continued rapid breathing →Decreased exercise tolerance →Wheezing, whistling, or abnormal sounds →Increased tail "pumping" with respiratory effort →Blocked nostrils and airways
<b>Possible Causes of Health Problems May Include:</b> Use common sense and take proper care of your bird.	→Nutritional abuse/deficient diet →Poor hygiene, dirty cages →Contaminated food and water (including dirty hands) →Exposure to unknown sick birds →Accidents, injuries, and stress →Foreign body ingestion - lead poisoning, digestive impaction →Vapors, toxic substances, exposure to overheated Teflon and other chemicals →Allergic reactions →Poorly developed immune system - buy from quality sources!

Center for Avian Adoption, Rescue, and Education

2202 2nd Avenue East, Suite D

West Fargo, ND 58078