

Your ferret's health check

If you have any questions about your ferret's health please do phone and ask to speak to one of our nurses.



	Normal	Abnormal	Comments
Mouth and Teeth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heart and Lungs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digestive System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skin and Coat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paws and Nails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bones and Muscles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urinary System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perianal Glands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toileting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Diet Ideal Diet

Weight Ideal Weight

Normal healthy adult bodyweights for ferrets:

Male (hob) 0.9Kg - 2.25Kg, Female (jill) 0.34Kg - 1.1Kg

Distemper Vaccination	- up to date <input type="checkbox"/>	requires vaccination <input type="checkbox"/>
Neutering	- completed <input type="checkbox"/>	advised <input type="checkbox"/>
De-scenting	- completed <input type="checkbox"/>	advised <input type="checkbox"/>



would benefit from

1. Check-up with the vet every 3 mo. to spot health problems early.

2.

3.

NEXT APPOINTMENT -

Sept 2008@VHC

Name

Date

Top Priorities for your Pet Ferret



- GET THE DIET RIGHT!** - your ferret IS what he eats. The healthiest way to feed your ferret is to use **James Wellbeloved Ferret Complete Diet** or **Frankie Ferret Complete Food**. If unavailable feed a complete kitten food such as **Hill's Kitten Food**.
- DON'T FEED...** dairy products, chocolate or similar goodies.
See inside for details on feeding.
- VACCINATION against DISTEMPER** -annual booster
- TEETH** - Keep the teeth healthy by feeding correctly (see inside), and by having the teeth checked regularly by the vet. Ferrets over 3 yrs of age benefit from annual de-scaling and polishing of the teeth.
- WEIGHT** - Check your ferret's weight regularly. Weight loss is usually a sign of ill health. (see the vet). Weight increase may be a sign of obesity or abdominal disorders.
- NEUTERING for male and female ferrets from 6mo. of age.**
MALE ferrets to reduce aggression and territory marking.
FEMALE ferrets to reduce the risk of life-threatening anaemia following prolonged season (or heat), and of course to prevent unwanted litters - ferrets can be very prolific.
Anaesthetics for ferrets - with our Isoflurane vapourisers a general anaesthetic for a ferret is now safe and routine..
- HEAT CONTROL - hormone injection for un-neutered jills**
- DE-SCENTING - removal of the scent glands** is done to reduce the powerful musk smell of a ferret. This option is available where family members find the scent of a ferret difficult to live with.
- FLEAS & WORMS** - no licenced routine prevention is available at present. We will supply treatment if fleas or worms are seen.

Visit our website: www.vet-healthcentre.co.uk

Veterinary Health Centre, Daisy St. Blackburn (01254) 53622

Vets: John Davies MRCVS, David Higginson MRCVS, Sam Purcell MRCVS

Practice Manager: Ruth Swan VN BSc(Hons) PhD



ENTERTAINMENT for your ferret?

Ferrets get on well together, infact they are usually overjoyed to meet each other. They are happiest in company and can be kept in 2's or 3's or larger groups e.g. 10 - 15. Fights may occur occasionally between un-neutered males. If you have a single ferret it is important that you give him/her lots of play stimulation.

YOUR FERRET'S CAGE

A cage is necessary to protect you ferret from loss or injury as well as to protect your home. Ferrets have strong teeth and need an even stronger cage. They can also get through tiny holes. Wire netting is not strong enough. Welded wire mesh 1" x 1" (or 1" x 2") is ideal, with wood or metal base and walls. Wood is easier to construct but harder to clean. Provide a "bed box" with old rags or towels in it - wash the bedding weekly.

YOUR FERRET ABOUT THE HOUSE

Loads of fun, but a modern home is full of many dangers for a ferret. Electric wires to chew through, holes to get lost in (eg under floorboards), mechanisms to get trapped in (eg reclining chairs). Read up about house ferrets and, as far as possible, make your home ferret proof. Keep house plants out of reach - ferrets love to dig. There is always a danger that your ferret will hide under a cushion or a rug and be accidentally stood upon. Use a cat collar with a small bell on it - this will help you find your ferret by following the sound of the bell.

TOYS - Ferrets are fun-loving, good natured creatures and remain playful throughout their adult lives. They are natural little clowns and will play crazy games even when alone. They will play with almost anything! Dog and cat chew-toys and squeaky toys, balls of all types (esp. knotted old socks!), cardboard tubes and boxes to hide in etc. A ping-pong ball thrown into a bunch of ferrets will stimulate a wild hockey match. Kong chew toys are ideal and can be stuffed with goodies in the same way we do for dogs. Take care that any chewed or damaged toys are removed to prevent your ferret swallowing bits of rubber or plastic.

ACTIVITY - Ferrets need little encouragement to exercise - they love it!. It's important that they have enough space to run around. An outside run is ideal. If not available provide lots of opportunity for crazy play in the house. After an energetic session a ferret can fall asleep suddenly almost anywhere and be "out for the count" ignoring attempts to wake him. A tasty bit of food under the nose will wake up a ferret at once!

HANDLING - Ferrets appreciate regular gentle handling. Take the opportunity to examine your ferret regularly for signs of ill health. Well-socialised ferrets will rarely bite.



GET THE DIET RIGHT!

Feed:

- ✓ **James Wellbeloved Ferret Complete Diet** or
- ✓ **Frankie Ferret Complete Food.**

If unavailable feed a complete kitten food such as **Hill's Kitten Food.**

CORRECT FEEDING

- 1. Feed a quality dry complete ferret food as the main food.**

Avoid overfeeding (to prevent obesity).

- 2. Treats** - small amounts fruit and veg. (raisons, grapes and banana are favourites). Remember to give a tiny taste - don't let these goodies become the regular food.

- 3. Fresh water daily** (in a water bottle).

FEEDING DISASTERS

- **Sticky, sugary foods** are bad for the teeth and cause obesity.
- **Too much food** - leads to obesity.
- **A fresh meat diet** (which is high in phosphorus and low in calcium) can lead to calcium deficiency and serious bone disorders.
- **Avoid vitamin & mineral tonics** unless advised by the vet. Some tonics can be toxic at high doses.
- **Frogs, birds, mice, chicks etc.** are still advised in many ferret books. They are best avoided as they can transmit parasites and infections.

Vaccination Protection

Distemper vaccination

Canine distemper virus is lethal to ferrets. There is no licenced vaccine for ferrets but our regular canine vaccine is considered safe and effective.

There are no other vaccines required for ferrets in the UK. In Europe and the USA rabies vaccine might be necessary

Ferret Web Site <http://www.ferretcentral.org/>