

Double 'D' Ranch

716-672-5678

www.Double-D-Ranch.org

bunnylady@double-d-ranch.org

DI SEASES WE HAVE DEALT WITH


By Debra Olon-West


Note: Information was found from a combination of sources, such as experienced breeders, our vet, and 'Official Guide Book: Raising Better Rabbits & Cavies' by the ARBA. We have been fortunate enough to work with a veterinarian who specializes in small animals.


CAUTION: this information is meant to supplement current knowledge and is no substitute for the care of a qualified veterinarian. If you are unsure what is wrong with your rabbit, please contact your rabbit savvy vet for help.

NON-INFECTIOUS CONDITIONS

Fur Chewing:


 Symptoms: Chewing of Fur on certain areas of the body; rabbit or other animals in the pen can chew fur.


 Treatment: Identify the cause if possible; add straw or hay to the diet to increase fiber; remove fur chewer from the pen. Adding 1 gram of Magnesium Oxide per pound of feed may also help.


 Prevention: High fiber rations and the addition of magnesium oxide to the diet.

Bun-Bun came to us with this problem, which in his case seems to be more of a nervous problem than anything else. He is very active and friendly, but doesn't care for the hay very much. However, he loves the fresh greens. We added the Magnesium Oxide to his feed; his fur has been slowly growing back.

Fighting:


 Symptoms: Aggressive behavior; chewing on each other while together in the same hutch, breaking skin or pulling out the other's fur.


 Treatment: Relieve overcrowding (remember 1 square foot per pound of rabbit inside of the hutch); cage cleanliness; fresh adequate food/water; Spay / neutering animals.

 Prevention: proper bonding; the best combination is a fixed couple of buck/doe

We would often see the fighting right when the kits are coming 'of age' (sexual maturity) at about 6 months. We often keep most of our rabbits separate from each other since they are pedigree animals and cannot be fixed to 'show'. We have seen successful bonding, however, with some of our clients, such as with Blue and Delta. It is inadvisable to separate a bonded pair.

Red Urine:

 Symptoms: Red colored urine that does not contain 'clots/flecks'; may be seen during the winter or when trays are being used inside the hutch, which makes the condition easily seen.

 Treatment: Not a disease.

 Prevention: More common when rabbit is on a high legume hay diet.

We have seen this before; the condition went on its own. If concerned, consult your vet.

Malocclusion (Buck Teeth or Wolf Teeth)

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🐰 Symptoms: Elongation of the upper or lower front teeth; the rabbit may not be able to eat.

🐰 Treatment: Teeth can be clipped; animal cannot be shown, as often this condition is inherited.

🐰 Prevention: Do not breed rabbits with this problem.

We had two rabbits (Kyle and Noah) with this problem and have managed it successfully using a cable wire cutter to trim the teeth every time they get too long (see a vet if you need to be shown how to clip the teeth). We also encouraged the rabbit getting plenty of hay and chew toys (apple branches are great) to help wear down the teeth.

Paralysis of the Hindquarter

🐰 Symptoms: Rabbit drags his hind legs; possible loss of bladder or bowel control; a violent scream from the rabbit at the time of injury or no condition may occur with no apparent cause.

🐰 Treatment: Seek professional advice for an accurate diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment advice; be prepared if euthanasia is recommended.

🐰 Prevention: Proper handling technique.

Roxy Heart came to us with this condition. I had to clean her hutch daily, line it with straw, have supervised playtime, and bathe her at least every other day/as needed. We were able to prolong her life for 9 months. We recommend that if you can rig a bunny wheelchair, this is advised for better exercise.

Hutch Burn

🐰 Symptoms: Chapped/scalded area around the vent area or inside of the hind legs. Watch for secondary infections.

🐰 Treatment: Thoroughly clean the hutch and affected areas of the rabbit; use antibiotic ointment on affected areas of the rabbit.

🐰 Prevention: Keep clean hutches; watch angle of urine guards.

We had a couple of rabbits with this problem on solid bottom hutches. Moving them to wire cages with a resting board helps, if possible. Lining the bottom of the hutch with straw also helps in additional treatment.

Coprophagy (eating of the night feces)

🐰 Symptoms: Usually seen in the late night or early morning when the rabbit consumes soft fecal material. Normal Activity.

🐰 Treatment: Do not disrupt, as this is the way that rabbits get their B vitamins to improve their general digestion.

🐰 Prevention: This activity is normal to increase digestion and absorb nutrients in the diet.

Note: The night dropping can smell unpleasant and may even resemble diarrhea, as it is soft. If you have questions, contact your vet.


Sore Hocks (Ulcerated Foot Pads)


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 Symptoms: Ulcerated or raised on the bottom of the feet; All 4 feet may be affected; Rabbit may sit on solid area or in crocks to relieve the discomfort; inactivity; failure to mate; inactivity. Watch for secondary infection.

 Treatment: Provide large solid area for the animal to rest on; treat affected area with an astringent until the area is healed.

 Prevention: Select rabbits that are calm and have large well-furred footpads.

Windy had this problem, as did some of our other rescues. Our key point is to periodically check the feet. If the rabbit has a history of sore hocks, we would simply put him in a solid bottomed hutch. For treatment, we would make sure the cage is kept clean, clean the feet, and put antibiotic ointment on affected areas.

Double 'D' Ranch

Deb and Dale's home for wayward bunnies

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