

## Chinchilla's Droppings Change And It Becomes Listless

**Could stress or something else cause a chinchilla to become listless and have a change in droppings?**

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**Q:** I am a new and proud mommy of a chinchilla. Being a new owner, I don't know that much about the health of a chinchilla. All of my research about chinchillas says that if their droppings are larger than normal or they have diarrhea it is a sign of sickness. Unfortunately, he has both. Also, he has stopped his regular activities like exercising in his ball and jumping around in his cage. Now all my chinchilla wants to do is sit in a corner of his cage and sleep. I am also seeing signs of him being lethargic. I have not seen any changes in his eating habits.

I think these symptoms could be because I gave him a different bag of food the other week and this week. Also it could be the stress of a new home, even though he has been with me for a couple of months now. What do you think could have caused the change in my chinchilla's droppings and behavior?

**A:** Chinchillas can have a variety of illnesses that all look the same to you and me. A chinchilla with dental disease, heart disease, intestinal disease, liver disease and even kidney disease may initially appear as you describe. The chinchilla can be lethargic, less interested in eating and not want to move around very much.

It is impossible to know for certain what is wrong with your chinchilla based on your description. I agree that your chinchilla could initially have been stressed by new food or even a new home. When that happens, chinchillas might not eat, which can quickly lead to liver problems that are difficult to treat.

Your best chance of helping your chinchilla is to go to your veterinarian. Your veterinarian will do a physical examination, look at the teeth, and maybe do some advance testing to determine what is wrong and the path to recovery for your chinchilla.

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