

## Hamster With Bloated Stomach Turns Blue

### **Why would a hamster's stomach enlarge and its skin turn blue?**

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**Q:** My question is regarding my 30+ month old, male, teddy bear hamster. The past few days I've noticed his stomach seems bigger, like it's bloated or something. And today, I noticed his skin seems blue in color. He's still eating and having bowel movements. What's going on? I'd take him to the vet, but I've been unemployed the past several months and have no money to do so.

**A:** I'm sorry to hear about your hamster. Unfortunately, there is little you can do to help him on your own.

At his age, it would be expected for him to develop diseases seen in older hamsters. The enlargement in his abdomen is probably either from fluid or from a mass. And the blue that you are seeing is likely an organ, such as the liver, pressed against the skin. The liver may be enlarged, or fluid or another mass is displacing the liver from its normal position and pressing it against the body wall. The liver might appear blueish under the skin.

If you cannot afford to visit the veterinarian, try to keep your hamster as comfortable as possible. Make sure food and water are always within easy reach, especially if your hamster has a tough time getting around.

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