

Gerbil Siblings Losing Fur From Tail And Tail Tip

Why would 2-year-old gerbil siblings suddenly begin losing fur on the tail and even the tip of the tail?

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Q: We have two male gerbils that are 2 years old and from the same litter. One has lost the fur from the end of his tail, and the other gerbil appears to have lost the tip of his tail. What could be causing this?

A: With two male gerbils that live together, the first thing I think of when I hear of hair loss and even mutilation of the tail is gerbil-on-gerbil aggressiveness. It is very common for gerbils to "barber" another gerbil, causing the hair loss. With severe aggressive behavior, there could be damage to the tail and the tip is lost or bit off.

The easiest way for you to tell if this is aggressiveness or some disease is to separate the gerbils. If the hair grows back and no more tail tips are lost, the cause was likely gerbil-on-gerbil violence. If the hair loss or tail tip loss continues, then the cause could be something other than behavior.

Other causes of hair loss in gerbils could be external parasites. The loss of the tail tip could be due to something even more serious, such as a loss of circulation to the end of the tail.

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