

## Chinchilla Losing Hair By Tail

### **Why would a chinchilla develop a bald spot?**

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**Q:** We have a 3-year-old, male chinchilla named Lord Chesterfield. He has developed a spot near his tail that is losing hair. What can we do about it? He is not showing any signs of other sickness and is active and alert.

**A:** There are a number of reasons for chinchillas to lose hair. One of the most common reasons is a superficial fungal infection on the skin. This is easily diagnosed by your veterinarian and, in most cases, is treated simply with topical medication.

If caught early, this infection does not spread to other areas of the chinchilla, to other chinchillas or to people. But it does not go away on its own, and that is why correct diagnosis and treatment is essential.

Other causes of hair loss could be "barbering" either by other chinchillas or himself. Or there could be something as simple as an object in his cage that he rubs against that causes him to lose hair.

It's not common in chinchillas, but we do see topical parasites causing hair loss.

The best answer is for you to visit your chinchilla's veterinarian. The veterinarian will be able to determine the cause of the problem using simple tests, including looking at the hair under a microscope and culturing the hair for a fungal infection.

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