

Hamster Has Multiple Health Issues

Is a hamster suffering from several health problems or just one with many signs?

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Q: My daughter's hamster has lost fur on its tail. It doesn't have diarrhea, but it's eating a little less. The hamster frequently runs around its cage making a hiss-like sound. I think it lost a toenail. She never bites when handled. Is she ill?

A: Most hamsters have a very short tail, and it can be difficult to tell if there is something wrong with it. It is unusual for a hamster to lose hair just on the tail. It is also unusual for a hamster to lose a toenail. Both a lost toenail and hair loss could be caused by trauma. If your hamster has a wheel, it could be that a toenail got caught in the wheel and hair was lost when the tail became abraded on the wheel. If you find further health issues, visit your veterinarian.