

Noisy Litter Box User

Is it normal for a ferret to make noises while urinating or defecating?

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Posted: October 1, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Q: My question is regarding our ferret, Rufus. He acts fine, eats normally and drinks lots of water. However, he has started to make a tiny little noise when he is using the litter box. He urinates and defecates. What do you think it may be? Do ferrets get urinary infections, or is this a sign of a much bigger problem?

A: Most ferrets do not drink a lot of water. That might be a sign that there is a problem lurking somewhere. Ferrets should not be making noises while urinating or defecating. There are a number of things that could be causing this. The two things we worry about are infections, as you mentioned, or something blocking his ability to urinate and/or defecate.

Ferrets do get urinary tract infections, but the rate of infection in ferrets is rare. Urinary tract infections, when ferrets do get them, are usually secondary to some other disease.

If something is blocking Rufus' ability to urinate or defecate, then he might make a tiny noise while in the litter box. What could be causing a blockage? Stones can be in the urinary tract. Also, masses, such as large lymph nodes, can impinge the ability of the urinary tract or gastrointestinal tract to work properly. Finally, adrenal gland disease can cause the prostate to enlarge to such an extent that it interferes with the urinary tract and sometimes even the gastrointestinal tract.

The best way to figure out what is going on is to bring Rufus to your veterinarian. After a few tests, including radiographs, you will probably find the answer to this problem.