

Lethargic Ferret Suddenly Develops Urgent Need To Urinate

Why would a lethargic ferret suddenly develop urinary trouble?

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Q: I took my ferret to the veterinarian last Tuesday because of diarrhea and lethargy. She found no obstruction during the physical exam, and the stool sample was clear of any obvious parasites. My ferret has not thrown up any food.

The veterinarian gave me anti-diarrhea medicine and amoxicillin for a 10-day period to be taken two times a day. My ferret perked up, but today he is running from corner to corner peeing little clear drops. He's not yelping or anything but is pretty frantic about getting out some pee. He has not done this before today.

I gave him the antibiotic, but I hesitate to give him the anti-diarrhea medication because of this new peeing behavior. I have been watering down his kibble for weeks now because we just saved another ferret from starving. My ferret did just eat a bunch of food about 10 minutes ago.

My concern is this frantic pee behavior. He's only been on the antibiotic for four days. Is this normal? Should I just continue treatment? He is playing with his toys, but I am still worried. I don't want him in pain. Have I given the medications a chance yet?

A: What you describe is not normal at all. This may be a reaction to the medication or it may be more signs of the disease. Sometimes, no matter how many tests we run or examinations we do, we cannot always make a diagnosis on the first trip to the veterinarian's office. Some signs do not show up until the disease has progressed further.

It may be that you are such a keen observer of your ferret that you brought your ferret to your veterinarian early in the disease process. For that reason, another visit or at least a call to your veterinarian is warranted. Or, it may be that the medications are having an unusual effect on your ferret. This is the other reason you need to call or visit your veterinarian right away. A different type of medication might be necessary for your ferret.