

## Ferret Suddenly Limp

### Why would a ferret suddenly begin limping?

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**Q:** My 5-year-old ferret is limping on his back legs. He was fine yesterday after his romp in the morning with the other ferrets. They all usually sleep all day until dinner when we take them out again for another romp. He got out of the cage and went down a level on the cage and my husband took him out from the bottom. He sat on the couch and ate treats with us. He got off the couch and seemed fine, but a little later he was limping. He is still limping but is playing in the tube with the other ferrets, eating and drinking. Is this a sign of an illness, or maybe he twisted his leg.

**A:** Since you did not observe any trauma, there is little information to indicate what could be wrong with your ferret. When people limp because they cannot put weight on their leg, the problem can be as serious as a ligament tear or bone injury, or as simple as minor inflammation in the muscles.

Ferrets cannot tell us what is hurting, so only your veterinarian can tell you for certain what is wrong with your ferret. You can look for signs, however, that might indicate how serious this may be.

Is your ferret eating and drinking well. Is he urinating and defecating normally? Is there any swelling on either back leg? Can he move his tail normally? Do you see any bruises or cuts on his back legs?

Ferrets can appear to have a problem with their back legs that is actually a sign of a serious internal medical condition. The best known of these is insulinoma. The low blood glucose that ferrets experience with insulinoma can cause the back legs to function abnormally and cause limping.