

Ferret Suddenly Loses Weight

Why would a seemingly healthy ferret suddenly lose weight?

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Q: I have a ferret that is about a year and half old. She was at a healthy weight, but all of a sudden she is very thin. She has been like this for a couple of months; she eats well and is not disoriented. I did notice the other day when she urinated, she pushed and it was mucus with some solid material. I have not had the time or the resources to take her to a veterinarian. Is there something I can give her?

A: First, are you giving your ferret a food designed specifically for the nutrient needs of ferrets? If not, that would be the first thing to do, if you cannot go to a veterinarian's office. Foods meant for other pets or non-quality products can cause problems in pet ferrets.

Your ferret's diet might not be the cause of your ferret's problem, but I always recommend people offer their ferrets quality ferret food.

If you are feeding a quality ferret food, then there are a few simple ways to look at this problem. Is your ferret really eating well? Are you sure the food is really being swallowed and not dropped on the floor, as may happen if there is dental disease? Is there food competition from other ferrets or other pets?

If you believe that the food is actually being swallowed and if the ferret is really eating well, then the food is not being digested. If that is the case, then there is a problem with the digestive system. At this point, you really do need to visit your veterinarian to determine which part of the digestive tract is not functioning properly.

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