

Ferret's Bottom Fur Turns Orange

Why would the fur on a ferret's bottom turn orange?

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Q: I do not know if I should be concerned. I have a 4-year-old female ferret, and for some reason the top of her tail (nearest her bottom, not the tip), is turning yellowish/orange. Her habits haven't really changed all that much. She's finicky and wants different things at various times, and not always at the same time, but nothing is out of the ordinary. I've checked all her hiding spots, and there is nothing in any of them that would change her fur colors. Please help, and let me know if I need to get her to the veterinarian or not.

A: It sounds like you have done a thorough search of your ferret's hiding spots, but you know how ferrets are, so it is probably best to re-examine every place she could possibly go.

If nothing strange turns up, is it possible that you changed her food and a color dye in the new food is coloring her feces, which then stains her tail? You would quickly know if this were true by looking at her bowel movements in her litter box.

Sometimes, soft stools or diarrhea are abnormally colored and look yellow or orange due to a disease causing these intestinal problems. Again, you should see signs of this in your ferret's litter box.

Finally, and this is something to speak to her veterinarian about, this could be the start of adrenal gland disease. In some ferrets, adrenal gland disease can cause the sebaceous (oil producing glands) to secrete more than normal, and the skin and hair can take on a yellow or orange appearance. If this is true, it is the first sign of adrenal gland disease, and you should explore this possibility as soon as you can. This is a great reason to visit your ferret's veterinarian and rule out this nasty-but-common disease.

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