

Could Ferret's Ear Growths Be Caused By Adrenal Gland Disease?

Does adrenal gland disease cause skin growths in ferrets?

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Posted: April 30, 2010, 5 a.m. EDT

Q: I have a 5-year-old, male, cinnamon ferret. In October 2009, my veterinarian diagnosed him with adrenal disease. I opted for monthly Lupron shots rather than surgery. He responded very well and now has a full coat of fur. In December, he developed a growth on his ear, like a wart. I had the vet look at it when he was in for his monthly shot in January. She thought it was too small for surgery at that time. In one month it grew to twice the size, and he is developing a similar growth on his forehead. Is there some topical application that I can apply rather than surgically removing the growth, especially because he is apparently developing another one? They seem to grow very quickly. Also, I have heard from a homeopathic vet that when you stop tumors in one area, they will grow in another. Is there any connection to controlling the adrenal tumors and the ones that are now popping up externally?

A: It is extremely unlikely that adrenal gland disease or your treatment for adrenal gland disease is the cause of these skin tumors. I do not believe that preventing or removing cancer from one area of the body will cause cancer in another area.

The best thing you can do for your ferret is to revisit your veterinarian, because the masses have changed since she last saw your ferret.

These skin growths may be benign mast cell tumors that are common skin tumors in ferrets. Of course, the growths could be something else; the sooner they are diagnosed, the better it is for your ferret.

Once your vet makes a diagnosis, she may be able to recommend a topical treatment but she may also recommend surgical removal of the masses. Until you know what they are, there is no topical treatment that can be recommended.

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