

Signs Your Hamster Is Sick

Know the signs of an ill hamster.

By Audrey Pavia

Posted: March 31, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Hamster Peanut/Courtesy Tiffany Ann Deschamps

Knowing the signs of illness in hamsters might give you more time to help if your hamster falls ill.

A healthy hamster eats well, grooms itself, runs and plays normally, and has a full, shiny coat and bright eyes. Hamsters are sturdy little animals, but poor care, an incorrect diet or an unhealthy environment can all cause illnesses. Illness can also result from poor genetics or old age. The following signs indicate that your hamster may be unwell:

- Loss of appetite
- Inactivity
- A dirty or matted coat
- Red or flaky skin
- Lumps beneath the skin
- Excessive itchiness
- Sneezing
- Runny eyes or nose
- Dull eyes
- Wheezing or labored breathing
- Shaking or shivering
- Wetness in the tail area
- Diarrhea