

Common Mouse Health Issues

Observe your mouse for signs of these common ailments.

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Cancer

Mice are susceptible to cancer, especially as they age. The most common form is mammary cancer. This type of cancer originates in the mammary glands in both males and females, but can show up as a tumor anywhere in the body. Mammary cancer has a poor prognosis and is usually fatal.

Lumps or bumps anywhere on your mouse's body could be a sign of cancer. Take your mouse to a small mammal exotics veterinarian right away if you find a growth on your small pet.

Ear Problems

Mice are prone to inner ear infections, which can cause a behavior called "waltzing." A waltzing mouse loses its balance when walking. Ear infections can result from bacteria that develop in the inner ear during a viral respiratory infection.

Some mice walk in circles when they have an ear infection. You may or may not see discharge in your mouse's ears. Take your pet to the veterinarian if you see "dirt" in your mouse's ears, or if its movement is uncoordinated or out of balance.

Dehydration

Mice can become dehydrated quickly if they don't have fresh water available at all times. It's difficult for a mouse to come back from dehydration once a lack of water has ravaged its body, so it's important to always keep water in your small pet's enclosure.

If you use a hanging water bottle, make sure the mouse is strong enough to get the water from it before you rely on it as your small pet's only source of water.

Nutritional Issues

Mice can suffer from bacterial infections and skin problems, as well as other health issues resulting from poor nutrition. To keep your mouse healthy, provide a balanced diet of pelleted mouse or hamster food, along with fresh foods daily. Feed seeds sparingly because these are low in calcium (a necessary nutrient for mice) and high in fat.

Bite Wounds

If your mouse is bitten by another mouse, take your pet to the veterinarian immediately. The bite may become infected, causing an abscess or a general infection in the body if not treated.