Budgerigar Health And Related

Illness in Budgies

Below are general illness seen in budgies. This FAQ was created by Neat (a forum member), this is not to replace taking your bird to an avain vet but to assist you in understanding what could be causing your budgies illness or simple information.

If your budgie is displaying any signs of illness keep your budgie warm and take them to an avian vet ASAP.

Bacterial Infections:

Chlamydiosis: This is the most common BACTERIAL infection . Signs vary some with have sudden death, some look sick, wight loss conjunctivitis, loss of feathers around one if not both eyes, fluid from the nostrils, sneezing Heavy breathing tail bobbing, soiled vent and Diarrhoea (usually Lime colour).

Birds can carry this but will not show signs until stressed, While some shed the infections to other birds but not show signs themselves Known as CARRIERS – If you bird survives this infections it can still have a reapeat of it at a later time.

Treatment is a long one, commonly used is Doxycycline (Polttavet or Doxyvet) or Baytril which is subscribed by an avian vet ..It must be used for 6 weeks – if they are being treated in a smaller time frame they can look fine but will develop the signs again and relapse

Psittacosis: Psittacosis disease is a potential problem for bird owners!!! The symptoms are like that of the cold and flu SO MAKE SURE YOU ADVISE YOUR DOCTOR THAT HAVE BIRDS because it can be transmitted from avian to human.

Birds with bacterial infections resembles birds with Psittacosis – There are a huge number of different types of bacteria that can cause diseases in birds – THE MOST SERIOUS ONES cause Septicemia (The build up of Poisons in the bloodstream)

Gram Negative Bacterial Infection: Birds like ourselves carry bacteria Good and Bad Called Gram Positive (Good) Gram Negative (bad). The negative one is usually the one that causes the problems with birds. – The avian vet will need to place the bird on a course of antibiotics and get swab samples sent away so they know what is the best antibiotic to use for that specific infections.

MEGA (Megabacteria) Megabacteria has been spoken of a lot in the last few years. Megabacteria is a secondary infection ...It is a disease that surfaces once the bird has been ill with other things. Its is not a primary disease. It is a disease that may well be present in most bird rooms but will remain undetected unless it is diagnosed by an avian vet. Megabacteria is an organism that lives in the intestines of an infected bird.

Some Signs to Look For (This may be present in the aviary but only some of the birds will have problems)

- The bird in the first stages show no symptoms at all, but as the infection progresses the bird will look ill, fluffed up increase in appetite.
- It will also start to lose a lot of its body weight., over a 12 month period, Looks like it is eating But it isn't, occasional vomiting,
- Poo may be enlarged and frothy with some seed or even blood in it.
- On examining the bird you will be able to feel the breast.

Megabacteria rods can be seen under the microscope and will multiply rapidly until death.
Separating and treating the bird with the general antibiotics will have little success in killing off this bacteria.
The treatment used today is called MEGABAC-S and it can be obtained from Vetafarm. MEGABAC-S comes in either capsules or in powder form and should be placed in the drinking water for 10 days
As with all infections extra attention should be placed on hygiene within the aviary.

Before you treat your bird make sure your bird has been properly diagnosed by an avian vet.

Respiratory Infections This infections may attack 2 separate parts the Upper NOSE, SINUS and WINDPIPE along with the Lower AIR SACS & LUNGS It commonly starts at the upper and left untreated will spread throughout the lower respiratory system.

Signs to Look For:

- Runny nose like
- Staining of the feathers above the cere
- Blocked nostrils or swelling around the eye area or mouth
- may also show signs of mouth breathing and sneezing. Most cases it is caused my Chlamydia, Mycoplasma or Vit A deficiency or a range of bacteria.

Bird owners mistake swelling around the eye as a sign of an eye disease, But it is infact a problem with the birds sinuses and will not improve with eye cream and / or ointments.

Treatment: INJECTABLE Doxycycline or Enrofloxcin or in water treatments are only good if infection is caught at a EARLY stage.... this is all done by your avian vet.

Allergies can cause respiratory like symptoms like a fever, but not very common. Cause of this are Cigarette somke, dust, ammonia from poo and household cleaning products .....

Lower Respiratory Infection: These are quite ill, They spend a lot of time fluffed up and hunched over, they will have issues breathing (tail bobbing) mouth breathing loss of voice and appetite they are weak and fly very poorly....

Disease in this area of the body is usually associated with my Chlamydia, Mycoplasma (is the cause of " one eye cold") or Vitamin A deficiency or a range of bacteria. They can respond well with Tylan. In places with High humidity ASPERGILLOSIS (a fungi that grown in the air sac) may be a part of the problem...

Non Infectious Diseases: These problems are not caused from an Infectious Organism so they aren't contagious, But a rather caused by a problem in their diet or environment, or family bloodlines

Tumors of the Kidneys , Ovary & gonads Common sign that there is kidney problems is lameness in one leg. Caused by pressure of the tumor on the sciatic nerve. Budgies are prone to tumors in these areas. Birds, may look suddenly unwell, have watery poo and a swollen abdomen. The Hen's ceres turns a dark blue (hens that are out of condition can have a light blue cere this is normal) and cocks turn brown.

Goitre_ Swelling of the thyroid gland at the base of the neck can be a goiter. It is commonly seen in budgies that are fed only seed which contains low Iodine. Iodine deficiency causes the gland to enlarge up to 5 times the normal size which places pressure on the windpipe and throat. Birds can't breathe properly or empty their crops.

Signs to Look For:

- vomiting
- tailbobbing (breathing issue) dry reaching and neck stretching ...

Treatment: : Add Iodine to drinking water once a week, place a clump of grass and soil in with them as this is their natural source of Iodine in the wild, as well as an iodine and mineral block should be in the cage and aviary. Consult an avian vet to ensure this is what your bird has first.

Gout: Cause by uric build up in the joints. The common cause is advance kidney disease, old age, diet hig in protein.

They will look depressed and ill, lame in one or both legs, swollen joints and feet (Vet can confim this with blood test)

Fat: (obesity) Having fat birds is a common problem now as we are developing larger breeds which exercise less. If you have a large number of birds that are fat, have a look at their diet. Many birds that are over weight may have a thyroid gland problem (found in some bloodlines)

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