Eggbound Hen

. **This is a very serious condition and should be considered a medical emergency.**

Egg binding occurs when a hen is has difficulty in laying an egg. There are many signs and symptoms that a hen that is egg bound may display. These include:

- a hen that looks distressed
- a hen sitting on the bottom of the cage
- a hen that has very large droppings that are very runny or contain blood
- a hen who whips her tail or strains painfully
- a hen that looks weak, depressed or is breathing rapidly
- a hen that looks nervous or moves rapidly from perch to perch
- a hen that is trying to stretch her body up to get relief

If you look carefully, you should notice a slight roundness of the underbelly or you may be able to feel the egg if you lightly palpate the area..

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO NOT TRY TO REMOVE THE EGG. If you do this and the egg breaks it can result in the death of the hen.

There are many causes for this condition including:

- a hen that is too young
- an egg that is too large
- an egg with a rough shell
- an egg that is too soft
- the hen's oviduct (where the egg comes out) is not elastic enough
- poor nutrition, a lack of vitamins or calcium
- a hen that is kept in a room that is too dark, cool or damp
- a hen that has laid too many clutches with no rest in between

As stated before, this is a medical emergency and a visit to your avain vet is essential.
Avian Vet Look-up

You can try to assist the hen by placing her in a warm environment, such as a hospital cage that is covered and has a soft cloth bottom (ensure the hen's claws can't get caught in the material) and dripping some warmed castor oil onto the vent. However this will usually only help if the egg is visible at the vent entrance. Keep the hen as calm as possible and transport her to your avian vet as soon as possible.

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