

Gastrointestinal Stasis in Rabbits

Information for the Rabbit Owner

Origin

Gastrointestinal (GI) stasis is the lack of normal movement of food through the rabbit's stomach and intestinal tract. It is currently thought that poor diet and management play a major role in the development of GI stasis.

GI stasis causes a very painful build-up of gas in the intestinal tract. The pain caused by this can be fatal.

GI stasis is many times mis-diagnosed as hairballs.

Symptoms

The major symptom is a sudden to gradual loss of appetite. You will also notice your bunny is listless and a decreased stool production.

Many times the diagnosis can be made on physical examination. We will typically take a x-ray to confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment

GI stasis can be fatal. Because of this, we recommend hospitalization for all GI stasis patients.

Treatment consists of improving the hydration status of the pet, controlling pain, and force feeding a high fiber formula. Occasionally, the pet needs to be placed in an incubator.

Treatment typically takes 5-7 days of intensive nursing care on our part. This is not a disease that is successfully treated at home.

Once the pet is eating, a good prognosis can be made.



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