

Mouth Rot (Infectious Stomatitis)

Information for the Pet Reptile Owner

Mouth rot is a bacterial infection of the mouth and associated structures (nose, tongue, etc.) caused by a bacteria known as *Fusobacterium*. This bacterium is found in the environment.

Once the mouth is infected, the destruction that the bacteria causes allows for a better environment for more bacteria to invade and grow. Over time, the cartilage of the nose can be destroyed leaving a disfiguring face. Because of this infection, the reptile stops eating leading to a more weakened state. Mouth rot can be fatal.

Factors that lead to mouth rot include: poor nutrition, vitamin deficiencies, mineral imbalances, poor sanitary conditions, improper heating and overall poor captive management.

Treatment consists of correcting the poor management factors (better diet, proper heating, vitamin and mineral supplements, etc.) and treating the bacterial infection with oral and topical antibiotics. In all cases, the infection should be cultured to determine what antibiotic would be best suited for this particular *Fusobacterium*.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- ◆ Prevent mouth rot in the first place by maximizing the environment and diet of your pet.
- ◆ Practice good hygiene in your management.
- ◆ If mouth rot occurs or is suspected, prompt diagnosis and treatment are essential to prevent severe disfigurement and possibly death.

If you have any questions, please telephone the Hospital.



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