



MEDICAL NEWS

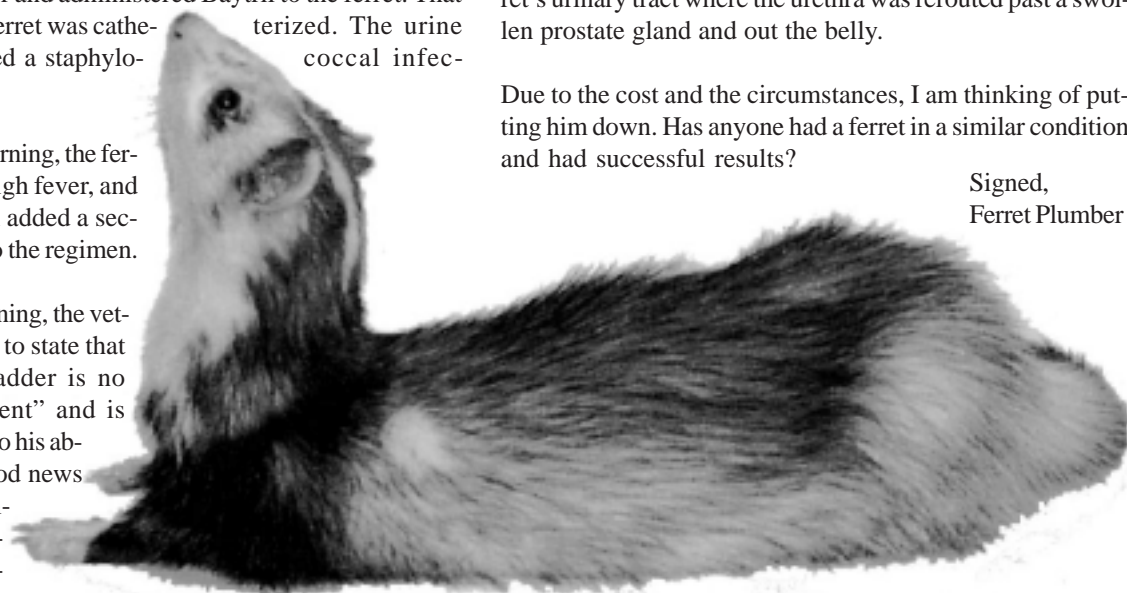
How Do You Fix a Stopped Up Hob?

Dear AFA:

On Thursday evening, I noticed that my 4.5-year-old male was straining to relieve himself but was not producing. On Friday morning, the veterinarian used a needle to partially drain his bladder and administered Baytril to the ferret. That afternoon, the ferret was catheterized. The urine sample indicated a staphylococcal infection.

On Saturday morning, the ferret had a very high fever, and the veterinarian added a second antibiotic to the regimen.

On Sunday morning, the veterinarian called to state that the ferret's bladder is no longer "continent" and is leaking urine into his abdomen. The good news was that his temperature has returned to nor-



mal. The bad news was that surgery was recommended to repair the torn bladder and/or urethra.

During four years on the "ferret [Internet] boards," I can only recollect one instance of a successful surgery on a ferret's urinary tract where the urethra was rerouted past a swollen prostate gland and out the belly.

Due to the cost and the circumstances, I am thinking of putting him down. Has anyone had a ferret in a similar condition and had successful results?

Signed,
Ferret Plumber

Urinary Blockage? Think Adrenal Tumor First!

by Charles Weiss, DVM
Potomac Animal Hospital, Potomac, Md.

In the male ferret an enlarged prostate secondary to adrenal tumor is the number one cause of dysuria (painful urination) and stranguria (inability to urinate). This is due to the tumor's releasing of excess androgens, or male hormones, which enlarge the prostate. Afflicted ferrets can present with mild straining or dribbling or rubbing their ventral abdomen/penis on the ground (maybe due to discomfort in trying to urinate), or they can present with a complete urinary blockage.

The recommended course of action is to evaluate the ferret immediately for adrenal tumor. In a series of ferrets in my practice in every case of complete blockage, surgical removal of the tumor has resulted in the ferret's ability to pass urine within 24-48 hours.

While it is impossible to place a urinary catheter in a male ferret due to the presence of an os penis (penis bone), 0 (zero) prolene suture has been used to clear obstructions with limited success.

When a ferret presents with a urinary blockage, cystocentesis can be performed while the ferret is anesthetized with Isoflurane using a 25-gauge needle (without ever causing rupture). Rupture could possibly occur if the patient moves or if a larger bore needle is used.

For those ferrets that are poor candidates for surgery, a newer medical alternative is the administration of the drug Proscar. Although use has been limited so far, good successes have been seen with no discernible side effects.

Less common causes of urinary tract blockage can be bladder stones, bladder tumors, and a tumor at the tip of the prepuce (sweat gland adenoma/adenocarcinoma).