



Groupe Vétérinaire MONVET Inc.

FERRET GUIDE



VACCINATE YOUR FERRET

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Basic vaccine

Distemper :

- Transmission by air.
- General symptoms : fever, digestive, respiratory, neurological, and cutaneous problems.
- Deadly.



First vaccination at 8, 11, and 14 weeks of age. Thereafter, boosters are to be given annually.

Rabies

- Affects the nervous system.
- Can be asymptomatic for several months.
- Zoonosis.
- No treatment available.
- Deadly.



First vaccination starts from 3 months of age. Thereafter, boosters are to be given annually.



WHY SHOULD YOU DEWORM YOUR FERRET?

Why should you deworm your ferret?

Ferrets can be carriers of various types of intestinal parasites without presenting any symptoms. The majority of these parasites are transmissible to other domestic animals (dogs and cats) and to humans (zoonosis).

When acquiring a ferret, a fecal analysis is recommended to identify the presence of parasites. At the time of your ferret's first examination, a fresh stool sample should be brought to your veterinarian. A stool analysis will allow him or her to establish appropriate treatment based on the parasites identified.



During the summer period (between the months of april and november), a monthly dewormer is recommended for ferrets who have access to outdoors.

When and how to deworm?

In order to rid your pets of parasites and prevent new infections, a combination of different products should be used and treatments should be administered and repeated at specific times during the year.



DEWORMING SCHEDULE

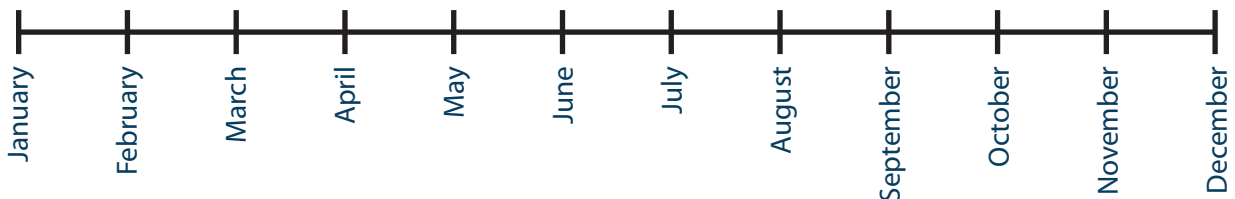
HEARTHWORM



FLEAS



INTESTINAL PARASITES



SURGICAL OPTIONS

Sterilization

In Quebec, the majority of ferrets are already sterilized when they're adopted. This makes it possible to control reproductive lines.

Neutering them also helps prevent the development of certain health and behavioural problems.

In addition to emit strong body odors, intact males can also develop undesirable behaviors such as aggression and urine marking if they are not fixed. Females can die from an overproduction of sexual hormones (hyperoestrogenism) if they are not spayed or if they are not mated.

In order to reduce ferrets' odor, some people will have their anal glands removed at the same time as the sterilization. However, because the procedure alone is often enough to greatly reduce ferrets' odor, most breeders decide not to have the anal glands removed.

Regardless of the surgery being performed or not, ferrets will always release their characteristic odor even to a small degree. That is because of the numerous bodily glands they possess in addition to their anal glands.



Laser surgery

For a few years now, the use of the laser in performing a variety of surgical procedures has been strongly recommended. This technique yields many advantages when compared to the use of the scalpel blade. In fact, the laser:

- Reduces post-operative pain.
- Reduces bleeding.
- Reduces post-operative edema (swelling).
- Reduces the risk of infection of surgical wounds.

Anesthetic safety

PRE-OPERATIVE BLOOD TEST

- Allows us to verify that the organs involved in metabolizing the anesthetic drugs are functioning properly.
- Helps to detect the presence of certain concomitant diseases often clinically unapparent which can increase the anesthetic risk.

INTRAVENOUS CATHETER

- Ensures venous access at all times during the surgical period for the administration of medication and fluids. This is of particular importance in case of a drop in blood pressure or cardio-pulmonary arrest.

INTRAVENOUS FLUIDS

- Helps to stabilize blood pressure in order to ensure proper perfusion of the major organs (heart, kidneys, liver, and brain) during anesthesia.
- Contributes to faster elimination of anesthetic drugs.



CARE FOR YOUR NEW FERRET



The mouth

It is important that ferrets receive proper dental care because periodontal disease is a frequent condition in this species. A marked accumulation of plaque and tartar is painful and can result in tooth loss.

Tooth brushing promotes good oral hygiene. However, in order for it to be effective, brushing your ferret's teeth, as with people, has to be done daily. A small finger brush or tooth brush for animals can be used, along with toothpaste formulated specifically for animals (it is not toxic if swallowed and contains enzymes that continue to work through dental plaque in between brushings).

Because a ferret's diet is similar to that of cats, high quality feline dental treats can be used to help provide proper dental care to ferrets.

The ears

It is important to frequently examine and clean the inner portion of your ferret's ear. Ferrets normally produce a lot of aural secretions, but they should not be present in excessive amounts. It is generally accepted that a cleaning done at least once every two weeks is adequate. The frequency of the cleanings can be increased to once a week if needed.

Just like dogs and cats, ferrets can develop otitis or have an ear mite infestation. The first symptom observed by owners is excessive scratching of the ears or neck. If this develops, it is important to consult your veterinarian in order to begin treatment.



If the secretions are accompanied by redness, swelling, or foul odor, you should consult a veterinarian also.

To perform a cleaning, apply a small amount of the cleaning product (for pets) on a cotton ball or tissue, and clean the ear with the tip of your finger. Allow your ferret to shake his head and remove the excess liquid with a clean tissue.

Do not insert a swab (Q-tip®) in the ear canal to avoid hurting it and to avoid pushing the secretions further down.

Eyes

It is normal to see clear secretions in the corner of ferrets' eyes. The secretions can be removed with a wet wipe designed to clean the eyes.

It is important to keep an eye on your ferret in order to detect any redness, swelling, yellowish or greenish secretions, rubbing or forced closure of the eyelids. You should consult your veterinarian if this occurs.

CARE FOR YOUR NEW FERRET

Bath

Baths can be given once a week or as often as needed. Your ferret's skin can become dry or damaged if baths are given too frequently. As previously explained, ferrets' characteristic odor can not be completely removed because of the presence of glands located all over their bodies. An occasional bath and daily cage cleaning, paying particular attention to the litter box, are the best ways to control ferrets' odor.

It is important not to use scented products to wash ferrets because they can irritate their skin. Don't hesitate to ask your veterinarian about which product to use.

When bathing your ferret, pay special attention to the eyes and ears. Avoid contact of water or shampoo with his face.

Water

Your ferret should always have access to fresh water. Water can be placed in a water bottle or in a bowl. Because ferrets do not always understand how the water bottle works right away, it is important to monitor their water consumption during the first few days following their adoption.

Water should be changed every day and the bowl or water bottle washed daily as well.

If you choose to use a bowl, make sure it is made of ceramic or any other heavy material because ferrets are experts at flipping their bowls and their content.

Feeding

Like cats, ferrets are strict carnivores. Fruits and other products that are high in sugar should be avoided because they can disrupt their gastrointestinal system. Be careful when giving your ferret treats because they contain a lot of sugar.

Foods that are specifically designed for ferrets are recommended for maintenance. Choose a food that has a uniform consistency instead of one consisting of granules of different shapes and colors.

Meat and/or eggs (cooked and without seasoning) can be added to supplement your ferret's diet or can be given as treats. In some cases, cat food can be used. We invite you to consult one of our veterinarians to help you choose a food adapted to your ferret.

Contrary to cats and dogs, ferrets do not have to have their food rationed. Because their intestinal transit is very fast, ferrets need access to food at all times or they risk developing low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).



Food bowls made of stainless steel, ceramic, or glass are highly recommended as they are hypoallergenic and bacterial resistant.



CARE FOR YOUR NEW FERRET

Cleanliness

Cleanliness can be taught to ferrets. Here are the steps to achieve it:

In a rectangular cage, the litter should be placed in one corner. In order to dissuade your ferret from using the other ones, place objects there that he will not want to soil such as food and water bowls, hiding boxes, hammocks, etc.

Wood shavings or other types of litter can also be used in this regard. Use blankets or newspaper as a substrate instead for the rest of the cage.

If your ferret defecates or urinates outside the litter box, clean the whole cage, but leave a small amount of soiled litter.

Punishment should be avoided when your ferret has an accident. It is better to encourage him by offering treats when he uses the designated area. Persistence is key!



Make sure a litter box is close when your ferret roams freely. It is recommended to place a litter box in each room of the house or to limit access to them.



Claws

Begin trimming your ferret's nails as early as possible so he can adapt to it quickly. To begin, cut one nail every day while making sure to enthusiastically reward him with a treat each time.

Gradually increase the number of claws you cut each time and the time between each cut until he becomes comfortable with the handling.

Once he is well accustomed to it, continue to cut his claws regularly, at least once a month, to prevent the quick (vein) from growing too long.



The microchip

Being small, agile, and curious by nature, ferrets can easily escape through open doors and get lost. In order to minimize this risk and prevent this from becoming your situation, we recommend placing a microchip on your ferret. The microchip is a tiny electronic device that is injected under his skin. It contains all the information needed to identify him and contact his owner. Should he get lost, he will quickly be returned home.

CARE FOR YOUR NEW FERRET

The cage

Since the cage is where your ferret will spend most of his time, it should be large enough to hold all of the necessities while at the same time allowing him to stretch his legs. The cage should contain a litter box, food and water bowls, and hiding spaces.

The habitat of the ferret's ancestors consisted of a network of burrows. Thus, it is important to recreate the same environment when setting up the cage. Ferrets enjoy different kinds of hiding spaces (tunnels, hammocks, covers, etc).

The cage should be placed in a fresh area. The ideal temperature is between 15°C and 21°C. Hot temperatures (more than 30°C) should be avoided as ferrets are prone to have heat strokes.

Exercices

Ferrets sleep for most part of the day, usually up to 20 hours. However, once awake, they are very active and energetic. It is important to allow your ferret at least 2 hours outside of his cage to play each day.

A variety of objects can be placed in the room to create a playing area. Offer him boxes, tunnels, hiding places, or even a plastic container with balls so that he can entertain himself. Stringed cat toys can also be used, but any pieces that can easily be swallowed should be removed (such as feathers for example).

Avoid toys made out of latex and/or foam.



Behaviour

Being predators by nature, ferrets love to hunt, which can be manifested by biting when they play. It is important to ignore your ferret when he acts this way. A product with a sour taste, such as lemon juice, can be applied to surfaces that you don't want your ferret to chew (shoes, slippers, feet, hands, etc).

Birds and small mammals (rats, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc.) should not be allowed contact with ferrets because they are natural prey for them. The presence of a ferret in these species' environment is also a source of stress for them. However, cats and dogs can cohabit well with ferrets. Supervision is still recommended.

Ferrets love to hide and crawl so be careful with small objects laying around that they can easily steal or ingest (ear plugs, headphones, laces, erasers, cat toys, and more).

It is important to adapt the home environment and block or camouflage any potential hiding places that can be dangerous before the ferret arrives. Make sure all of your furniture has a hard surface underneath, as ferrets can dig holes and ingest the foam. Avoid reclining chairs and be careful with wall-openings.

HEALTH RECORD

VACCINATION SHEET

VACCINE	<input type="checkbox"/> week	<input type="checkbox"/> week	<input type="checkbox"/> week	<input type="checkbox"/> week	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs	9 yrs	10 yrs
DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)														
DISTEMPER														
RABIES														
VETERINARIAN'S INITIALS														
PERMIT NUMBER														

MICROCHIP

IMPLANTATION DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)
MICROCHIP NUMBER



DEWORMING

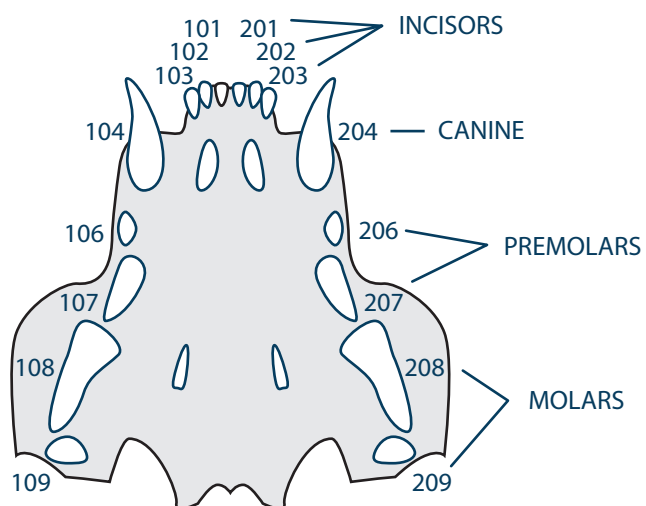
DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	FECAL ANALYSIS	TREATMENT

HEALTH RECORD



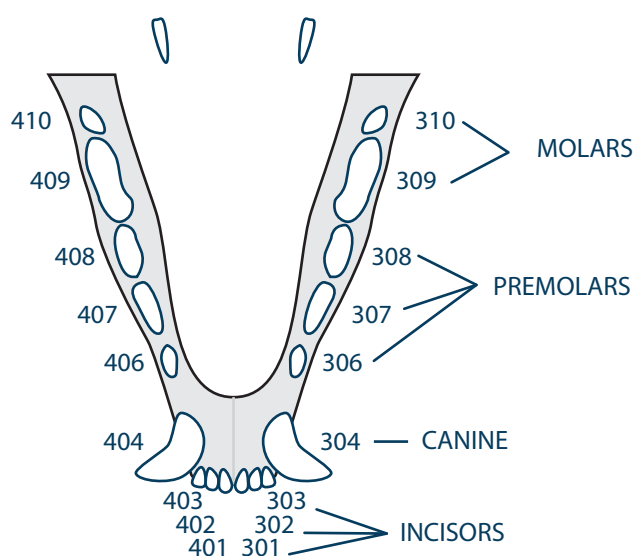
DENTAL CHART

RIGHT



MAXILLARY
(upper jaw)

LEFT



MANDIBULAR
(lower jaw)

DATE OF DENTAL PROPHYLAXIS
(DD-MM-YYYY)

DENTAL X-RAYS (YES/NO)

EXTRACTIONS

COMMENTS



HEALTH RECORD

MEDICAL HISTORY

DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	DIAGNOSIS

TESTS/RESULTS

DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	TESTS	RESULTS

WEIGHT CHART

DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	WEIGHT	DIET	COMMENTS



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Certain services are not available for all animal species nor in all our locations.

Working together for animal health and wellbeing.



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DE LA RUE PRINCIPALE INC.**

Membre du Groupe Vétérinaire MonVet Inc.

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