

[Budgerigars / Budgies - Common Diseases](#)

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[Budgie Information](#)

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Budgies, like all birds, are very adept at concealing their illness. This is a self-preservation mechanism, as the sick and the weak are the ones predators will focus on. By the time your pet looks ill, you can assume that your pet is seriously sick and is likely to deteriorate quickly unless appropriate treatment is provided.

By observing your pet daily you will learn its normal behavior and you will be able to notice anything out of the ordinary. Below is a list of things to look out for as possible indicators of disease / illness; and a vet may need to be consulted.

Signs of illness to watch out for:

Critical / Serious - bird needs to be taken to vet:

- [respiratory problems / abnormal breathing](#) (tail constantly moving up and down)
- discharge from the beak, eyes or nostrils
- face and head feathers coated with mucus and semi-digested seed
- abnormal [droppings](#)
- [abnormal feathers, feather growth, bleeding feathers, or abnormal molt](#)
 - [French Molt](#)
 - [PBFD](#)
 - [Polyoma](#)
- [bleeding](#)
- drooping head, tail or wings
- dull or swollen eyes
- falling off the perch

Could be serious - consult with vet:

- loss of appetite
- fluffed up and/or untidy appearance
- abnormal [droppings](#)
- excessive [feather picking or plucking](#)
- abnormal sleep pattern (continuous, both feet on the perch when normally one foot is tucked up, head tucked under the wing, head turned towards the wing with eyes only partly closed)
- any change in normal activities (talking or whistling, playing with toys, preening, interaction with other birds or humans, energy levels, different perching area)
- disorientation
- drinking a lot more water than usual ([diabetes?](#))
- soiled vent (diarrhea)

- hunched over posture
- lumps or swellings on the body
- sitting on the bottom of the cage
- vomiting
- [weight loss](#)
- drooping head, tail or wings
- cere changes color to purple brown (in male budgies) - could be a clue that a budgie is suffering from testicular cancer.

Diseases / conditions budgies are usually diagnosed with:

- **Malnutrition:**

- **Vitamin A** and **calcium / vitamin D deficiency** are the most common deficiencies seen in seed junkies. Since seeds are higher in fat than many other foods, many seed eaters are often obese as well.
 - Vitamin A promotes appetite, digestion, and also increases resistance to infection and to some parasites.

Please refer to "[Bird Nutrition](#)" for food items rich in Vitamin A.

[Learn more about calcium deficiency](#)

- Overweight birds are more susceptible to [arthritis](#) and [fatty liver disease](#).

What you can do:

Introducing healthy foods - such as green leafy vegetables; red or orange fruits and veggies (which contain beta-carotene) - is a natural way to provide this nutrient safely. Calcium blocks should be provided also, to prevent calcium deficiency.

For seed addicted birds offer [sprouted seeds](#) instead. [Sprouted or germinated seeds](#) are usually more easily accepted by "seed addicts" than fresh fruits and vegetables.

- **Sprouted seeds are healthier** as the sprouting changes and enhances the nutritional quality and value of seeds and grains. Sprouted seeds are lower in fat, as the process of sprouting utilizes the fat in the seed to start the growing process - thus reducing the fat stored in the seeds.
- **[Sprouted seeds](#) will help balance your bird's diet** by adding a nutritious supply of high in vegetable proteins, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and chlorophyll.
- Soaked and germinated "oil" seeds, like niger and rape seeds, are rich in protein and carbohydrates; while "starch" seeds,

such as canary and millets, are rich in carbohydrates, but lower in protein.

- **It is an invaluable food at all times; however, it is especially important for breeding or molting birds.** Sprouted seeds also serve as a great rearing and weaning food as the softened shell is easier to break by chicks and gets them used to the texture of seeds.

- Malignant Tumors, Lymphomas and [Fatty Tumors](#) (may be caused by seed-only diet): Tumors can be benign or malignant (cancerous) and can involve any organ or system. Some species of birds tend to develop benign fatty tumors called "Lipomas."

Once cancer has been diagnosed, luprin is usually prescribed to reduce the tumor and, hopefully, prolong life.

- **Lipomas** are commonly seen in overweight [Amazon Parrot](#), [Rose-breasted Cockatoos](#) and [Budgies](#). It seems that older budgies are more prone to tumors of the ovary, testicle or kidney, which may eventually put pressure on the sciatic nerve on the affected side, resulting in lameness of the foot or leg.
- **Fibromas** are tumors found on the wing and they may need to be surgically removed. In some instances, amputation of the wing may be necessary.
- **Testicular cancer in budgies:** The cere turns purple-brown in male budgies.
- **Gout** - due to [kidney disease](#) or an underlying metabolic problem. Show up as lameness or acute illness.
- **Diabetes** - Treatable with insulin
- Viral Infections such as [Beak and Feather](#) (PBFD) and [Polyoma](#)
- **Reproductive Problems**, such as [egg-binding](#), [egg peritonitis](#), [excessive egg production](#) and abdominal wall herniation.
- **Giardia Infections**, causing gastrointestinal signs such as vomiting and diarrhea
- **Highly susceptible to:** [Polyoma](#) ... [Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease, PBFD](#), [Beak and Feather](#) ... [Feather Plucking / Mutilation](#) ... [Neoplasia \(cancer\)](#): Budgies are reputed to have more tumors than any domestic species. Tumors of the kidney, ovary, teste and liver are common ... [Mites](#): Scaly-face mites are common and are treated with Ivermectin ... [Feather Cysts](#) ... [Feather Lice](#) ... [French Moulting in Budgerigars](#) - A Review - Inte Onsman; Mutavi ... [Scaly Face / Scaly Legs](#) ... [Aspergillosis](#)

NEED A VET?

USA: [Find Your Local Avian Veterinarian](#)

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