

Poopology

Poopology: "Bird Droppings" & Bird Health

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The below information has kindly been provided by Dr. Rob Marshall, Avian Vet - <http://www.birdhealth.com.au>

For more information on identifying sick birds, please [go to this website](#)

Abnormal Dropping:

The droppings reveal a wealth of information for the observant owner and are a good indicator as to the health of the bird. With experience, you can easily monitor the health of your bird by observing for any dropping changes. The early recognition of a dropping change allows you to implement an immediate recovery plan that protects the health of the pet bird. A Water Cleanser or Megamix is used as the first line of defense against illness and works well at the first sign of a change in the droppings.

Abnormal Bird Droppings:

1. Increased size
2. [Oily, bulky](#)
3. Discolored to a shade of green. Any color from khaki to forest green.
4. Are often wet.
5. Carry a smell.

Loose droppings (can be caused by stress, disease, or certain foods), or droppings that contain undigested seeds (i.e. [PDD](#)) can be sign of diseases. Also change in color of droppings (please see below).

Healthy Bird Droppings:

1. Small with a white cap.
 2. Usually have a down feather attached to it.
 3. Have no sign of wetness surrounding it.
 4. Have no smell.
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In young birds clinical signs can include: rough plumage, low body temperature, tremor, lethargy, [conjunctivitis](#), dyspnea, emaciation, sinusitis, yellow to greenish droppings or greyish watery droppings.

Adult birds may develop symptoms such as: tremors, lethargy, ruffled feathers, progressive weight loss, greenish diarrhea, high levels of urates in droppings and occasional [conjunctivitis](#)

The three components to most droppings.

1. Urine consisting of a crystal urine called urates The clear part and is like water. Sometimes the Urine and Urates will combine and form a cloudy liquid, don't be alarmed if you can't always tell the two areas apart.

Urates (the chalky white part)

- **Green:** [Liver Disease](#) or Anorexia
- **Yellow:** [Liver Disease](#) or Anorexia
- **Brown:** [Lead Poisoning](#)
- **Red:** Fresh Internal Bleeding (low in the digestive track) or [Kidney Disease](#)
- **Black in stool:** Old blood
- **Increased Urates:** Dehydration* and possible kidney problems (*Birds suffering from dehydration may have crinkly skin around their eyes. Another way to diagnose dehydration is to pinch their skin for a second. Dehydrated skin will remain tented for several seconds, rather than bouncing right back. [Hydrating a bird](#))

2. A non-crystal urine called urine (clear water). Sometimes the two types of urine are mixed creating a cloudy white urine. Important changes include color changes and amount. This part will appear chalky white and has a consistency that isn't really watery or solid. The consistency could be compared to Elmer's' glue, without the stickiness.)

Urine (the clear watery part)

- **Green:** [Liver Disease](#)
- **Yellow:** [Liver Disease](#)
- **Red:** Internal bleeding (low in the digestive track), [Lead Poisoning](#), [Kidney Disease](#)
- **Increased Urine:** Drinking a lot, Eating foods high in water or Disease (often bacterial)

3. The third part of the droppings is the feces which comes from the colon and consists of digested food and it's the only real solid part.. The feces should be solid; it can be coiled up or uncoiled and it is okay if it is broken into pieces. It may be straight, coiled, or even broken up in to smaller yet still tube shaped pieces. The color varies depending on the

types of food eaten. Red pellets and strawberries produce a red colored dropping. (This does not apply to the urine.) Seed and green vegetables produce a green dropping. (This does not apply to the urine either.) Blueberries and blackberries produce black droppings.

Feces(the solid tubular part)

- **Black or Tar-like:** Internal bleeding (high in the digestive track) - potentially ingested something that is causing internal injury
- **Pea Green:** [Liver Damage](#)
- **White or Clay color:** Pancreas or digestive problems
- **Yellow to Greenish or Greyish Watery Droppings:** One possibility: [Chlamydophila psittaci](#)
- **Lumpy or Undigested food:** Incomplete digestion, [PDD](#), [Giardia](#), hypermotile intestine

Diarrhea is when the fecal material is not holding its tubular shape - instead its consistency is that of pudding. Diarrhea can be a sign of disease or stress -- as well as being caused by special food items One of the things to look for is blood in the feces. If the feces is fresh and black in color and there were no blueberries in the diet then this indicates blood in the digestive system (melena). When the blood passes through the lower digestive system, it is digested turning the red blood into a black tarry color, staining the feces black. If you notice black droppings and the color cannot be explained by the food it ate, take your pet to the vet immediately. This is serious and causes death if not treated in a timely manner. If you wait until your bird is weak and fluffed up, its chances are poor.

Any change of color that cannot be explained by the diet should be investigated by your veterinarian.

- Don't forget to look for real worms like tapeworms and roundworms.
- Greenish diarrhea, for example, can be a sign of [Chlamydophila psittaci](#) - a disease transferrable to humans (commonly known as "Parrot Fever.")

Steatorrhoea is the formation of bulky feces. Stools may have an oily appearance or be foul smelling. There is increased fat excretion.

Seen in:

- [Bacterial overgrowth](#)
- [Giardia](#) - protozoan parasite
- **Primary sclerosing cholangitis:** Primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC) is a form of cholangitis due to an autoimmune reaction. A cholangitis is an inflammation of the bile ducts of the liver. Primary sclerosing cholangitis leads to cholestasis (blockage of bile transport to the gut). Blockage of the bile duct leads to accumulation of bile, which damages the liver, leading to jaundice and eventually causes liver failure.

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