



Flystrike prevention for rabbits



Flystrike Condition

Flystrike is an unpleasant and distressing condition, not just for your rabbit but for you as well. Unfortunately it is quite common, but can very easily be prevented. It occurs mainly in the spring and summer months when flies are more active and looking for somewhere to lay their eggs. Your rabbit and its cage is an ideal area.

The fly eggs hatch into maggots which then feed on the rabbit, burrowing into its flesh. The rabbit is quite literally eaten alive. The disease progresses at an alarming rate once the maggots have hatched, often resulting in death within a few days.

Some rabbits can be successfully treated, but flystrike is often fatal.

Flystrike Prevention

What can you do to prevent this?

1. Examine your rabbit every day

Always make sure your rabbit is clean. A rabbit with diarrhoea or a dirty bottom is at far more risk, as the smell will attract the flies. Ensure that your rabbit has a balanced and complete diet as this will help prevent diarrhoea. If you see any signs of maggots, remove them with warm soapy water, thoroughly dry the affected area and contact your vet immediately.



2. Feeding your rabbit

Avoid overfeeding greens, fresh grass and succulent vegetables as these often precipitate or worsen diarrhoea. Your pet rabbit's diet should consist mainly of hay and/or pelleted dry food.

3. Keep the hutch clean

Use plenty of good quality absorbent bedding in your rabbit's hutch and toilet area to avoid excess moisture collecting. Clean out any dirty bedding daily as clean bedding is less likely to attract flies.

4. Once a week thoroughly clean and disinfect the hutch

At least once a week, completely empty everything from the hutch and disinfect with a purpose-made solution suitable for the use with small animals. Allow the hutch to dry completely then place new, clean bedding.

5. Fly prevention

Although the first four points will significantly reduce the number of flies around your rabbit, it may be necessary to use some more direct methods of fly prevention. These include the use of insect repellents specifically designed for rabbits and the use of fly screens.

By spending a little time doing these few things you can prevent your rabbit from suffering from a horrible disease.

For further information please ask at reception.