

Notice of Possible Disease Hazard

Psittacine species and other birds are occasionally infected with an organism, which can cause disease of birds and humans known as psittacosis or “parrot fever.”

Signs of Disease in Birds

The bird may show nasal discharge, sneezing, cough, ruffled feathers, drowsiness, shivering and diarrhea (these symptoms may be present in other diseases of birds also). The illness can cause the death of some birds, while others may recover. Apparently healthy birds may be carriers of the disease. The causative agent is excreted in the droppings and other discharges of infected birds and the disease may be transmitted to humans who become exposed to such discharges through close contact with the birds or their cages.

Signs of the Disease in Humans

One or two weeks after exposure to infected birds, humans may develop a flu-like or pneumonia-like illness characterized by some or all of the symptoms of chills, fever, headache, muscular aching, cough and pneumonia. Psittacosis may be mild or severe and is rarely fatal. The same symptoms can be caused by many other infectious agents and therefore the specific diagnosis of Psittacosis can be made only by means of laboratory tests of several specimens of the patient's blood. Owners of psittacine birds should keep the possibility of this disease in mind. If illness of this type develops in persons who have been in contact with psittacine birds, the physician should be advised of such contact so that he may obtain the proper specimens for laboratory examination. If the diagnosis is confirmed by the laboratory tests, the physician will be able to prescribe proper treatment.



This sheet is intended for general informational purposes only and is not, and should not be considered by you as a substitute for professional training and/or medical advice. If your animal appears sick or is exhibiting unusual or aggressive behavior, please seek medical attention immediately or contact a professional trainer in your area.