

“Ick”



What is it, and can you get rid of it?

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Newby's Glider Nook

What is Ick?



- “Ick” is not a medical term, it is a description. “Ick” describes how the joeys look. Their fur looks “icky”, hence the name “Ick”.
- There is NO relation to the disease that fish get.





Who can get it?



ANYONE that has breed-able gliders
can have “Ick” joeys.



The Parents



- The parents pass an infection to their joeys, whether it be from the mother having a pouch infection, a skin infection, or a urinary tract infection (UTI).
- In most cases, the parents do not display any symptoms at all. They can actually be carriers but appear not to be sick.
- A common trait with the affected parents is that they ate **EVERYTHING** on their dinner plate. Most gliders will leave the hulls of the peas, corn, green beans, etc. These parents did not leave a thing behind, as if they were starving.

The Parents....continued.



- Their feces was discolored and dry; it was very hard and black.
- No other symptoms were noted.
- They have bright eyes, alert ears, are very active, and have healthy coats.



Compromised Immune System



- Mothers produce extra antibodies for the joeys in the first few weeks of being out of pouch (OOP), after which time she starts producing less and less. At that time, the joeys should be producing their own antibodies.
- It is during this crucial stage that the joey's immune system can be compromised. Joeys will then begin to start displaying symptoms of "Ick".




Joey's Symptoms



- Most of the time the symptoms can be so subtle that it is undetected right away. A simple browning or yellowish of the nose and very subtle 'bed head' look to the fur is a dead give-away for the onset of "Ick".





“Ick” can blossom very quickly to a life threatening situation.

- Their belly will turn a yellowish brown and very wet at different times of the day.
- Joeys can go downhill very fast and become so dehydrated that they will need subcutaneous (Sub-Q) fluids even to the point that hand raising is necessary.
- This can happen within days of the onset of the first symptom.
- If there is a pair of joeys, usually they will both be affected, and the severity of infection may not be the same for both joeys.



Cause of Death



- The infection itself usually does not cause the death of the joey...it is the dehydration that will.
- The more severe the infection, the higher the risk of death.



“Ick” KILLS!



“Ick” has:

- Claimed the lives of embryos before they have even made it into the pouch (theory based on several months of no reproduction in otherwise regularly producing parents.)
- Caused joey pulling
- Caused cannibalization
- Caused rejection

Healthy parents generally will not do any of those things if there are no health issues to start.





Stress

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We all know that stress causes all kinds of illnesses in humans, as well as animals. In the case of “Ick”, it has also been found to be true.

Immune systems can be compromised due to stress and can trigger bacterial and fungal infections as well as opening the door for parasite cysts to bloom.

Just because the parents are not displaying an illness does not mean they are not passing it along to their joeys.



Cure



- Without proper testing and treatment of the parents, the issues will NOT go away!
- Testing must be done on both parents to determine which is the carrier.
- Fathers tend to have a UTI
- Mothers can have either a UTI, skin or pouch infection.

Recommended Testing



- **Aerobic Culture**
- **Fungal Culture**
- **Susceptibility test**

- Fecal tests locally, as well as a tape test
- Anaerobic culture locally
- Follow up fecal test (Zoologics in California).

- Histopath on deceased joey: (Zoo/Exotic Pathology)
 - severe dehydration
 - yeast on her fur
 - perfectly fine organs





Pouch Swab



- A simple pouch swab is NOT recommended in this case.
- A deep (high up) pouch swab is needed. It is then sent to the lab for a culture, such as Idexx Laboratory
- This particular test can run as high as \$200.00 or more but is VERY important in determining the proper medication needed.

Vetericyn VF Formula

Treatment



Regardless of what infection the parents have, you will **HAVE** to use Vetericyn VF formula for the affected joeys.

This **MUST** be applied to the joeys at least 3 times a day, if not more.

Treatment for the parents and the joeys have to be strictly adhered to, and very vigorously!



Some cases may be very mild and some can be very intense. It can be a short process of a month, or it can take several months to clear up.

As previously stated, if the parents are left untreated, they will continue to have joey problem. Some have had an ongoing affair with “Ick” for a number of years because they are unwilling to do what is necessary.

To completely get rid of “Ick”, follow through with proper testing and treatment. It can get very costly. If you are not willing to pay to have your gliders treated, then you are not going to get rid of it.



Is “Ick” Contagious?

Here is where it can get tricky. “Ick” in itself is not contagious, but the illness that can cause the symptoms is contagious. It depends on what the parents are infected with will determine the outcome in your home.

Adhere to proper hand washing in between cages.

In most cases where it spread between cages, it was due to stress and not cross contamination. It is difficult not to stress when gliders are sick, but the need to assert calmness and normality during this time is very crucial to their health.



“Ick” infected gliders were housed with non-infected gliders. None of the non-infected gliders contracted “Ick” by being housed together.





Sanitize and Quarantine?

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Many cases have shown that owners becoming overly stressed, sanitizing and quarantining their gliders has brought on more stress to the rest of the breeding gliders and made things worse.

Constantly switching pouches, over cleaning cages, rearranging cages, and moving them into other rooms, hospital cages, etc., affects every glider in your facility.

*An infected female does not need to be quarantined from her cage mate and/or joeys; cage mate and joeys would have already be exposed.



Stress Triggers



- Moving to a new home
- Getting new cages
- Moving cages from one location to another
- Getting new gliders
- Getting new pets
- Company (family, friends)
- Weather
- Loud Noises
- Changing detergents
- Air fresheners (new smells of any kind)

These are just examples of stress related issues in "Ick" homes, it does not mean these things WILL cause illness in your gliders.

Myths – If you have an “Ick” Joey...

- You must have nasty husbandry habits
- No one will ever adopt your joeys
- You will be blackballed in the community
- You will never get rid of the joey
- The joey will pass it on to their offspring
- The parents should NOT continue to be bred
- Is contagious
- Is MRSA and is not curable

FALSE



What does "Ick" look like?

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Beginning – fur looked ‘off’

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2-3 days later...



The bellies...



One week after onset...



Going in to Week 2...



Approximately 2 ½ Weeks...



3 ½ & 4 Weeks with a Black Beauty



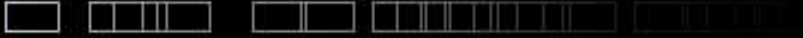
5 Weeks



6 Weeks



7 Weeks



At 4 Months Old

