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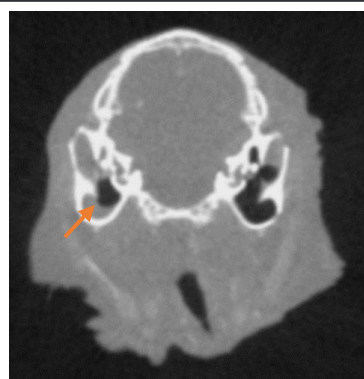
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Do You See What I CT?



Gastrointestinal Stasis (GIS) one of the most common reasons rabbits and guinea pigs come to our clinic. While it sounds complicated, it just means the pet is not eating, digesting, and pooping as it should. There can be many causes for this, including low dietary fiber, foreign body or hairball obstructions, or even appendicitis or a secondary disease process. Often GIS is a symptom of other health issues the pet is suffering. This is why advanced imaging techniques such as CT scans are invaluable in exotic pet medicine. Initial diagnostic tests like bloodwork and urinalysis can give us clues, but a CT scan gives us an in-depth perspective. This helps us identify conditions that would otherwise remain undetected. Here are some cases of "GIS" where CT scans played a critical role in finding the root cause and developing tailored treatment plans for better health outcomes:



This 3-year-old rabbit was brought in by his concerned owners because he was acting unusual and had developed "acute GIS", meaning he suddenly stopped eating and pooping. At the doctor's advice, his family chose to pursue a CT after initial external exam findings were unremarkable. CT imaging showed bilateral otitis externa (ear infection in both ears) with left-sided otitis media (middle ear infection in left ear, indicated by the orange arrow). This diagnosis would have been nearly impossible with just a radiograph since there were no bony changes in the middle ear and the canals were very narrowed. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories were started, and Next Gen DNA sequencing was performed to determine which bacteria were causing the infection. Pseudomonas otitis was confirmed, and medications were assessed to ensure the correct antibiotic was chosen to treat the infection.

The family of this 8-year-old rabbit brought her to see us because she was not hopping as much and was not eating or pooping well, AKA "GI stasis". CT imaging showed that her lack of appetite and lack of mobility were both caused by pain due to spondylosis deformans of the lumbar spine wherein bony spurs appear along the edge of the bone and disc space is compressed (indicated by the orange arrow – there should be space between the bones as there is to the right side of the bone), and mild sacral retrolisthesis wherein a single vertebra slips and moves back along the intervertebral disc underneath or above it (indicated by the yellow arrow – that bone should be in line with those to its left). With this detailed information, a comprehensive treatment plan was developed to manage the rabbit's condition effectively.



Is your bunny acting funny? If you notice any unusual behavior, or most especially if your rabbit is not eating tons of hay and pooping great, give us a call or schedule an appointment online ASAP. Even though GI Stasis is a symptom, not a cause, it is a dangerous condition that can rapidly become fatal. Learn more about your rabbit's normal and abnormal behaviors in our latest blog by clicking the link below:

<https://birdsandexotics.com/blog/is-your-bunny-acting-funny/>



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