Daily Observations: Physical Health

Observing all of your animals daily is a vital part of caring for them—and the best way to identify illness or injury early. Early detection and treatment improves health and well-being.

Both physical and behavioral observations are important to get a complete picture of an animal’s well-being. Physical observations may include:

**HEALTHY SIGNS**

- **EYES, EARS, and NOSE:** Clean and clear
- **MOUTH:** Clean teeth and gums
- **SKIN and HAIR:** Glossy, clean
- **BODY CONDITION:** Optimal for species
- **LIMBS:** Nails, claws, hooves at proper length
- **ELIMINATIONS:** Stool formed

**UNHEALTHY SIGNS**

- **EYES, EARS, and NOSE:** Discharge, redness, hair loss, shaking head, blinking excessively
- **MOUTH:** Tartar buildup, red and bleeding gums, injuries, bad breath, excessive salivation, difficulty eating
- **SKIN and HAIR:** Dull, hair loss, mats, itching, lumps, bumps, wounds
- **BODY CONDITION:** Underweight or overweight
- **LIMBS:** Lameness, wounds, calluses, overgrown nails or hooves
- **ELIMINATIONS:** Loose or bloody stool, parasites

If you see any unhealthy signs, it may be time to consult with your veterinarian for proper evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment.

This Animal Care Aid is part of a series developed to provide information about daily observation of animals. An additional aid with information about behavior observations is also available.