

# 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:



**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

## HEALTHY 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



## UNHEALTHY SIGNS

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.

Questions? Email us at [CenterforAnimalWelfare@usda.gov](mailto:CenterforAnimalWelfare@usda.gov)

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