SIGNS OF CONCERN IN RATS

OBSERVE YOUR RATS CLOSELY FOR ANY SIGNS OF STRESS, PAIN, ILLNESS OR INJURY

- Make sure that you are familiar with your rats and how each individual normally behaves. This will not only help to develop a bond between you and your rats, but will also help you notice if any of your rats are behaving differently, which can be an early sign that something is wrong.

- Your rat could be stressed if they show any of the following, and you should investigate further. If you are at all concerned always seek the advice of your vet.
  - grooming their head and forepaws more than usual;
  - increased aggression;
  - vocalisation;
  - Chromodacryorrhoea;
  - hiding more than usual;
  - increased thigmotaxia;
  - increased fear of novel things;
  - anxious behaviour in a rat which is normally confident;
  - exaggerated escape behaviours;

- Consult a vet immediately if you think that your rat is in pain, ill or injured; or if any of them show any of the following signs:
  - not eating or drinking;
  - not eating previously favoured foods;
  - drinking lots;
  - losing weight, or quickly putting weight on;
  - diarrhoea;
  - avoiding social interaction;
  - starry coat (oily, clumped matted and/or unkempt);
  - not grooming;
  - sneezing, wheezing, or breathing funnily;
  - sunken or dull looking eyes;
  - discharges from their eyes or nose;

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- reduced activity;
- sleeping more than usual (i.e. when your rats would normally be active);
- hunched stiff body posture;
- walking funny;
- not able to balance properly;
- guarding a painful area.

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