

# STASIS IN RABBITS



✔ this brochure is Veterinarian approved

Stasis in rabbits refers to gastrointestinal stasis (GI Stasis), a serious condition where the digestive system slows or completely stops. Rabbits are sensitive creatures when it comes to their digestive health. Any sudden changes in diet or stress can lead to gastrointestinal issues like bloat or gastrointestinal stasis, which can be life-threatening if not addressed promptly.

## Preventing GI Stasis

- Maintain a proper diet rich in hay and if switching pellet brand, do so slowly.
- Avoid high-carbohydrate or high-fat foods - limit to occasional treats.
- Provide ample space for exercise.
- Ensure a stress-free environment
- Regularly check for any signs of dental issues or health problems that might contribute to stasis.
- Veterinary check-ups are essential for your rabbit's overall health.



### Signs of GI Stasis

- Not eating anything - offer favourite treat to see if there is any interest.
- Very small fecal pellets (poops) - or producing none at all.
- Lack of movement.
- Hunched sitting position.
- Pressing belly onto the floor.
- Ignores interaction / appears less interested than usual.

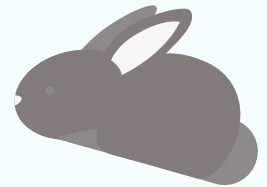
# Be Stasis Ready!



- 5ml Syringes
- Critical Care Formula
- Simethicone (Baby Gas Drops)
- METACAM® (meloxicam oral suspension)
- Towel
- Blanket

## Assess before trying to manage GI Stasis at home

### Check the Belly!



- 1 Feel the stomach area by feeling for the belly behind the ribs.
- 2 If it is soft and squishy like putty, you can safely attempt to manage the stasis at home.
- 3 If you're able to, put your ear to the belly and listen. Belly sounds are a positive indication.

**if the rabbit's stomach is distended and rock-hard, it can mean it's already packed with consolidated food.**

**Giving the rabbit water might help soften the contents, but more food will only make things worse. It could also be a sign of other illnesses. It is best to visit a vet.**



...shedding or a buildup of fur can contribute to blockages or obstructions in the gastrointestinal tract. Keeping your rabbit's fur groomed and managing excessive shedding can help prevent stasis.

## Managing Active GI Stasis

- Pain Management: Address any pain the rabbit might be experiencing. Pain can contribute to stasis, so pain relief may help stimulate movement and appetite. Administer the correct dosage of METACAM® (meloxicam oral suspension).
- Feeding: If your rabbit has stopped eating altogether, mix up some Critical Care powder into a solution and syringe-feed your rabbit. If you do not have critical care on hand, you can use cooled boiled water (warm) and mash the pellets into a solution. This will ensure your rabbit remains hydrated, too.
- Exercise: Encourage gentle movement to stimulate the digestive system. Allow the rabbit to hop around in a safe, stress-free environment.
- Massage: Take your rabbit onto your lap while on the floor (so that there is no risk of jumping from high). Sit your rabbit in your lap and massage the belly with gentle pressure, in downward motions. You can also use the end of an electric toothbrush to apply vibration to the belly.
- Temperature Control: Keep the rabbit warm as stress and cold temperatures can worsen stasis.
- Medication: Administer 0.5-1ml of *Simethicone* each hour until stasis is resolved. This can be found at most pharmacies and is sold as baby gas relief / gas drops.



**IF YOUR RABBIT HAS SHOWN NO IMPROVEMENT IN TWO HOURS, OR HAS WORSENER, TAKE YOUR RABBIT TO A VET IMMEDIATELY**



### DID YOU KNOW?

Rabbits have a complex digestive system that consists of two parts: the foregut and the hindgut. The foregut includes the stomach and the small intestine, while the hindgut includes the cecum and large intestine.

The rabbit's stomach can actually hold quite a lot. It can take up 1/3 of the entire belly when full.