



WORLD PARROT TRUST

WHAT TO EXPECT:

# Vet Exam for Your Parrot

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Having your parrot regularly health-checked is vital to their long-term health and wellness.

It is important to establish a relationship with an avian veterinarian you are comfortable with – and to have an idea of what to expect from your visit – *before* emergencies happen.

**Birds can become unwell without warning; finding out a bird's current health status can inform any problems that may come up in the future.**

During the first visit your vet will establish a baseline (set of normal health parameters for that bird). If you know your bird's age (even approximately) that's a help.

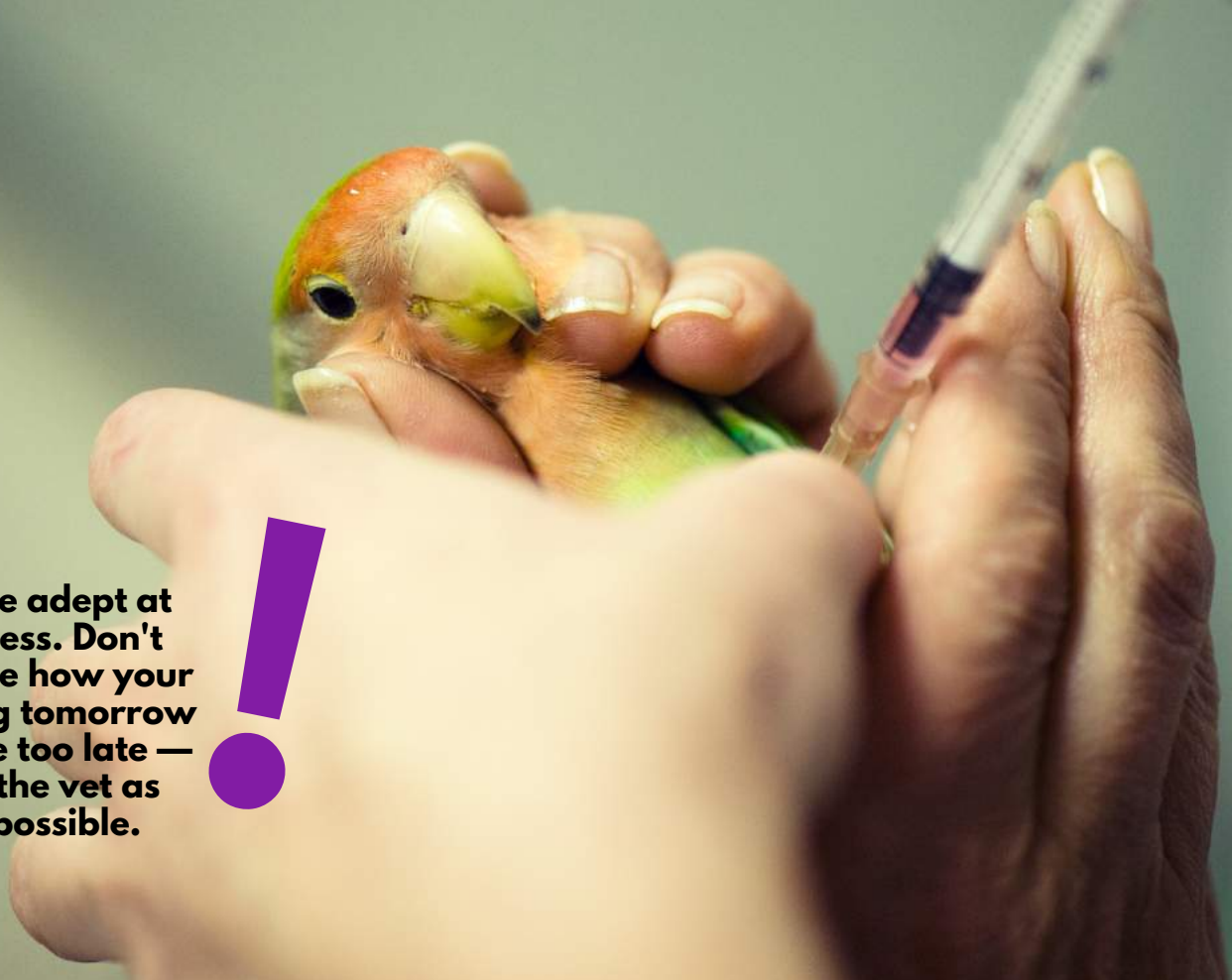
The examining vet will start off by weighing your bird (usually by placing it in a large, well-ventilated plastic container or on a perch on an electronic gram scale).

The vet may need to gently restrain your bird by wrapping it in a towel (a 'birdie burrito'), with its head exposed and wings and feet under control so that the exam can proceed. It can be helpful to get your parrot used to these exams by practicing this at home and positively reinforcing the experience with a favourite treat or special attention.

Next, the vet will ask you questions about how your bird has been (behaviour-wise, eating, activity level) and go through a thorough examination of the body systems: wings, legs and toes (musculoskeletal), ears, eyes, nares (nose) and mouth (sensory, respiratory and oral), and the abdomen and vent (gastrointestinal and genitourinary). They will listen to the bird's chest and heart for abnormalities, and check breathing and heart rates.



**Parrots are adept at hiding illness. Don't wait and see how your bird is doing tomorrow as it may be too late — take it to the vet as soon as possible.**



Then comes the breastbone (or keel) to see how much muscle development there is and for signs of overdevelopment (possible obesity). And then the extremities: wings (including feather condition), feet and toes. The plumage (feather coat) is also checked for signs of stress or disease.

With early signs of trouble your vet may decide to order blood tests, x-rays or other diagnostics to rule out different conditions. (These procedures may be done in the treatment or diagnostic part of the vet clinic where parrot caregivers don't usually go and are over fairly quickly.)

The whole exam will likely take about 30-45 minutes and then you and your bird can go on your merry way, confident in the fact that you're taking positive steps to ensure its health.

If you don't have an avian veterinarian, you can use the resource below to find one in your area:

**AAV (Association of Avian Veterinarians)**

*Includes International Listings*

<https://www.aav.org/>