Ear Mites:
Symptoms: Shaking head, digging at ears, crusty/bloody scabs in the ear. In severe cases, infestation can spread to other areas of the body. Possible Treatment: Veterinarian administered anti-parasitic medication.

Toenails:
Need regular trimming every 4-6 weeks using scissor or guillotine type clippers. A blood vessel (the quick) runs lengthwise through the nail, and can be easily seen in rabbits with light coloured nails. Apply styptic powder to stop the bleeding if the quick is accidentally cut.

Fur Mites:
Usually appear on the neck or spine areas first.
Symptoms: Dandruff, dry skin, bald spots, thinning hair, scratching, white scaly skin.
Possible Treatment: Veterinarian administered anti-parasitic medication.

Sore Hocks:
Sitting on wire (especially Rex breed or overweight rabbits) or sitting on wet surfaces can cause ulcerated lesions on the rabbit’s feet. Symptoms: Awkward movements, bald spots/scabs on bottom of feet. Possible Treatment: Clean lesions, apply antibiotic ointment and keep cage clean and dry. Provide a soft surface or resting board in the cage for the rabbit to sit on. Severe cases should be assessed by a veterinarian.

GI stasis (decreased gastrointestinal motility):
Serious condition! If a rabbit has only eaten or defecated a small amount in the last 12 hours, seems listless or is uninterested in food or has other noticeable behavioural changes, he needs immediate veterinary attention. Possible Causes: Stress, diet changes, lack of fibre, too many carbohydrates, dehydration, an underlying condition causing pain (ie: molar spur, or gas), blockage of hair and food. Symptoms: Loss of or decreased appetite, sitting in a hunched position, inability to get comfortable, scant/small feces, behavioural changes. Possible Treatment: Veterinarian should palpate stomach/intestines and may take x-rays to determine if there is a blockage. Therapy may include: fluids (sub-q or children's Pedialyte), simethicone (Gas-X), motility drugs (if no blockage is present), or enzymes.

Gastrointestinal (GI) issues:
Problems include constipation, diarrhea, GI stasis, and blockage. Some causes are: diet changes, lack of fibre, too many carbohydrates, liquids ingested. Possible Treatment: Include more fibre, water, and can include fibre laxatives. In some cases, antibiotics may be needed. Be sure to check with your veterinarian first.

Flea Burn:
Fleas can cause a burn if they are left on the rabbit for too long. Some rabbits may react to fleas by becoming drowsy and unbalanced and may roll over uncontrollably. Often caused by an inner ear infection, E. Cuniculi (parasite), or bacterial infection. Possible Treatment: Immediate veterinary care is required to determine the cause and the best form of treatment. The anti-nausea drug, Meclizine (trade names: Antivert or Bonamine), may help to control dizziness.

Sitting on wire:
Symptoms: Rabbits need their hind legs to push up and get comfortable. Scant or small feces, behavioral changes. Possible Treatment: Fluids (sub-q or children’s Pedialyte), simethicone (Gas-X), motility drugs (if no blockage is present), or enzymes.

Flea Control:
Some flea control products that are safe for kittens, such as Advantage (administered by a vet) can be used. Do not use Frontline, which can be toxic to rabbits! Flea dips and flea baths should also NOT be used.

Determining Gender:
Determining the gender of young rabbits is not easy. Don’t take chances! Keep rabbits separated until an accurate gender assessment can be made. Using your index and middle finger, press gently on either side of the genital mound. Males: a curved tapered protrusion should be visible. Testicles should appear when the rabbit is approximately 10 weeks old. Females: the protrusion will resemble a slit or be more V-shaped.

To enquire about our services, please see our “How To Videos”. For further information visit our website to check out our “How To Videos”. This guide is not intended to replace veterinarian care. Have your rabbit examined regularly. Contact us: info@ontariorabbits.org Website: www.ontariorabbits.org