



July 2005

This is a newsletter from The Birdcare Company.

The main topic is nutrition for birds suffering from PDD or other serious digestive disorders. We hope you find it interesting.

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[If you live in the Americas, Asia, Australasia or Africa please take this link.](#)

PDD and other serious digestive disorders

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The two cases illustrated here highlight that the quality of life of such birds can be excellent. Both of these birds live perfectly happy and healthy 'normal' lives. In fact both are in such excellent feather and body condition that you would not know that they had nearly been on death's door just a short while ago.

Rafiki's story also highlights the distress for both the bird and the owner of persisting with 'conventional' foods

(pellets, seeds etc) in cases of digestive malfunction. Switching to Special Needs Diet early in the diagnostic process will often aid recovery and enable the vet to teach crop tubing or other feeding techniques to owners lacking such experience. We also highlight how much easier it is to use a well designed crop tube of the correct size!

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Georgie's story demonstrates that some birds confirmed with PDD are still capable of leading astoundingly healthy lives when fed on Special Needs Diet.

These two stories are quite long but I believe they are well worth reading by both pet bird owners and veterinarians.

Malcolm Green Director, The Birdcare Company

Rafiki's Story

Rafiki's owner, April, sent us this 'diary' in late June 2005. It highlights the trauma of chronic digestive disorders like PDD (Rafiki does not have a positive diagnosis for this disease so we cannot be 100% certain that this is his problem). It also highlights the impact of nutrition specially designed for this purpose.

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Dec. 6, 2004 - I called Dr. G today. Rafiki continues to get worse. He seems to feel so horrible, as if he is about to die. I started giving him some nutriberry last week since he feels so bad. This is his favorite thing in the world, and if he's dying, I want him to be happy. I told Dr. G that I am convinced he has lead poisoning. The antibiotic didn't help, so what else can it be? He has almost all the symptoms. He made Rafiki an appointment to be seen on the 10th with another vet for an x-ray.

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Dec. 14, 2004 - Since seeing that x-ray, I have been feeding Rafiki a liquid diet. I make formula out of his pellets and give him juice. I am afraid he is having trouble digesting because of that stuff in his stomach. This morning I gave him his second injection. This is so hard. He is so bonded to me and loves me so much, and he doesn't understand why I have to hold him down and cause him so much pain. The injections go into the breast muscle and I know it hurts him. I sure hope this helps him.

Dec. 23, 2004 - Went back to Dr. G today. Rafiki isn't improving on the Calcium EDTA. If he had heavy metal toxicity, he would have improved some by now on this drug. I am so confused now. If I don't do something, Rafiki will die soon. Dr. G believed if he was going to die, he would have already died. He says when you notice a bird is critically ill, they usually die right away. No answers once again.



Dec. 27, 2004 - I am starting to wonder if Rafiki might have Proventricular Dilation Disease. I have read so much about bird illnesses online, and he does have symptoms of PDD - lethargy, scant feces, polydipsia and polyuria, vomiting clear liquid, diarrhea, excessive appetite, slow crop, and small bits of undigested food in his poop. This is scary. He has almost every symptom. Dazzle had neurological symptoms, which in some birds with PDD, that's the only symptom.

Jan. 13, 2005 - I had throat surgery recently and couldn't feed Rafiki formula everyday because of the pain medicine I was on. I let him eat Harrison's pellets out of his bowl. He's been back in his cage for a couple of weeks now. I have a heat lamp on top. He screams a lot, seems to be in pain. He gets real nasty and grumpy with me when I try to get him out. This isn't like him at all. His poop looks horrible, tiny little threads with hardly any urates. I can't keep water in his water bowl, it's gone in two hours. I am ordering him a special PDD formula I found online from The Birdcare Company in Europe. I think he needs to stay off solid foods for a while to see if that helps. His crop is so slow to empty, I think he will die of an infection if he keeps eating solids. The food seems to be stuck in him. His breath even smells bad.

Jan. 23, 2005 - I got the formula in today. He won't be fed anymore solids for a while. We'll see if this helps. It's supposedly made for PDD birds, and is a nutritionally balanced and complete diet.

Feb. 6, 2005 - Good news! Rafiki has done so well on this formula. He has been on it for 100% of his diet for 2 weeks. He seems full of energy again, for the first time in months! He's chirping and being funny, and he's been up on the perch instead of on the bottom of the cage. This stuff is great! His poop looks a lot more like normal poop now. He still drinks a lot. I had to remove the water bowl 2 weeks ago, so he wouldn't drink too much. He chewed a wooden ring off one of his toys today, and nearly chewed the whole toy to splinters. He is definitely feeling much better!

Feb. 7, 2005 - Guess I spoke too soon. Rafiki's crop is slow again. He doesn't want to eat much today.

Feb. 10, 2005 - Rafiki went back to the vet late today. His crop hasn't emptied in 12 hours. I am getting very worried. I think his G.I. tract has shut down. I discussed euthanizing him with Dr. G. He asked me why I wanted to euthanize him. I told him that I didn't want him to suffer, but I was still unsure about euthanizing him. I feel like we haven't done all we can do for Rafiki. He felt so good for the past 2 weeks on the new diet, so what went wrong? The poor little bird slept through most of that vet visit. Dr. G said he didn't want to euthanize him if I was unsure about it. I also pointed out to Dr. G that

Rafiki had just finished molting and had stress bars on his feathers. This can be a sign of illness or nutritional deficiency during the time the feathers were forming. We will know after the next molt if the formula helps that.

Feb. 11, 2005 - I know what went wrong now. Rafiki passed a bunch of splinters in his poop today. He ingested quite a bit of that toy he chewed up earlier in the week. He must have been blocked up with wood. I guess with PDD, that would happen. The impaired G.I. tract can't move things through efficiently anymore, so any solid particles would stay in the crop and stomach. I have removed all the wooden perches and toys. Rafiki has always been a big chewer, but I never thought he was eating the wood until seeing it in his poop today! Unbelievable! Could it have been wood chips in his gizzard on the x-ray?

Update (Mar. 22, 2005) - Rafiki has done real well on the formula, and since I removed the wooden toys and perches. His weight has stayed a constant 158-164 grams. His beak has become so shiny and smooth. It was always real flaky and crusty. I have never seen it not peeling. This is a good sign. The formula must be good for him.

Update (April 4, 2005) - Rafiki seems to be stable. He gets formula once in the morning and once in the late afternoon. He is given water by syringe only, since he drinks so much

from the bowl. We try giving him pelleted food every couple of weeks, but he still can't digest it. He has quite a bit more undigested food in his poop now, than he did a couple of months ago. Also, if he eats a little, his crop gets very slow to empty, and he feels bad all over again. We aren't going to euthanize him. He's doing so good on the formula diet. He does miss his wooden toys. We will have to take him to the vet soon for his beak to be trimmed since he can't do it himself anymore. We try to give him a somewhat normal life. I take him out a lot for car rides, and let him go outside and enjoy the sun. I am convinced he has PDD, especially after eating solids last time. There was so much undigested food in it. I tend to spoil him a bit more lately, because I don't know if he will be alive the next morning when I uncover his cage.

Update (June 28, 2005) - Rafiki is doing real well. He looks beautiful and has kept his weight at 161 grams. As of three weeks ago, I have not tried feeding him anymore solids. He is on Special Needs Diet, and as long as he gets only that, he does real well. I believe his G.I. tract is severely damaged and this is all he can digest. I still think it's PDD. I tried giving Rafiki Celebrex for a couple of weeks in early May, but it didn't help. He's on no drugs. He gets SND three times a day in water or clear juice. He also gets ginger, alfalfa, dandelion, kelp, and powdered barley juice. I no longer give him Harrison's avian enzymes. I did that only after the times I let him eat a little solids to help him digest it, but it seems that he doesn't need them with SND. He digests it fine on his own.

Notes

1. Because April did not know The Birdcare Company existed at this stage, we were not involved in Dazzle's case. Whilst the CNS version of PDD or epilepsy are both possible causes the symptoms described are, in our opinion, classic ones of calcium deficiency. When we analyse the cases referred to our BirdVet Online service about 70% show symptoms consistent with calcium deficiency. Vet research in the USA suggests that 98% of pet birds there get less than the recommended levels of calcium in their diet. We believe that effective supplementation with Calcivet is advisable for all pet birds.

2. White blood cells are the body's 'Rapid Reaction Force'. Billions of them are produced to help repel all sorts of infectious organisms. Why would anyone want to reduce the level of white blood cells in an infected patient? Our approach

is to support the production and effectiveness of white blood cells with our 'white cell support system' which is incorporated into our products Guardian Angel and Poly-Aid. Interestingly a recent veterinary seminar was held in the UK titled 'Not all birds suffer from Baytril deficiency' which suggests that some vets agree with us!

Drugs are only effective against specific target organisms. The immune system has a far broader spectrum of activity. Be delighted if the white cell count is high - the bird is already dealing with the disease so give it support not drugs that will impair white cell production. This does not mean that certain conditions do not benefit from drugs but the routine use of broad spectrum anti-bacterials should be considered most carefully if we are to reduce the prevalence of 'superbugs' in our animal and human populations.

Malcolm Green - Director, The Birdcare Company

GEORGIE

LIVING WITH PDD SINCE FEBRUARY 2003

This article dated 1st July 2005

Georgie, my beloved Moluccan Cockatoo aged 12, was diagnosed with PDD by crop biopsy in February 2003 - in March 2003 he gave up eating. As a result I first crop fed Georgie on Special Needs Diet from The Birdcare Company in March 2003 in an attempt to keep him alive. Georgie gained weight over a period of time (about 25%) and his condition dramatically improved as a direct result of his new diet. Georgie is now an extremely cuddly, happy, noisy, healthy and incredibly mischievous Moluccan cockatoo with so much character, along with perfect feather condition. He has had several injuries during this period resulting in extensive veterinary treatment including surgery and fortunately has sailed through all treatments magnificently as if he was a 'well' parrot. Georgie now weighs around 950-1000 grams and is fed every 4 hours on 80% Special Needs Diet mixed with 20% ground Feast administered by crop tube. Georgie has around 20-22 spoons of SND each day and continues to refuse any seed, pellets, human food, etc. His only

other indulgence is a little fruit and very occasionally a tiny piece of dunked digestive biscuit. His bloodwork was checked recently and I was advised his bloods were satisfactory, therefore needing no extra medication apart from his usual Celebrex - I was instructed to continue with the excellent work! I have lost count of the number of 1.5

KG tubs of Special Needs Diet I have used on Georgie but I believe it to be in the region of 25 (gosh, that's 82.5 lbs of SND



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for one little 2 lb parrot). To date none of my other 3 Moluccans (who are all in very close contact with Georgie) have shown any signs of contracting PDD.

Georgie continues to survive PDD against all odds some 29 months after its initial onset, which I am led to believe is an incredible achievement and by all accounts a miracle. His quality of life continues to fulfill him completely, he is the noisiest, naughtiest and most mischievous parrot of all my 4 Moluccans and continues to be the most cuddly, affectionate and loving parrot I and my friends have ever experienced. Georgie has on many occasions tried to mate with my female Baby whom he is extremely bonded with (they have been together since babyhood).

Georgie recently took part in an Animal Open Day for Unusual Pets and proved to be the star of the show due to his amazing performance, cuddliness and outrageously naughty and mischievous behaviour together with his 135 db screams and excellent talking ability - everyone who experienced Georgie fell totally in love with him. It seemed to everyone, especially Georgie, he was born to perform and did so with such vigour and enthusiasm! The avian vet who first diagnosed and treated Georgie for PDD saw him at this Open Day and said he was in unbelievable and incredible condition (he had not seen Georgie for around 18 months as I had moved home and changed to a different avian vet).

Once again thank you Birdcare so sincerely for giving me the last 29 months of such special joy and precious times with my beloved Georgie - I know it is only Birdcare's products that have kept him alive for all of this time despite his fatal condition.

With so much gratitude forever.

Yours sincerely

Janet M Worsley

The new crop tube you sent last week makes my life so much easier - why did I not have it 2 years ago?? I only ordered it as I wanted a spare just in case I lost the original one. I thought I had lost it a couple of weeks ago when I took Georgie to perform at his Open Day but fortunately found it - what a panic that was. It was a Saturday evening and Georgie had not been crop fed since first thing that morning in all the pandemonium!

The bore in the new crop tube is larger - almost twice the size I would guess and the mixture goes down the crop tube with so little effort - have to be careful not to do it too fast! How could I have struggled so much for more than two years! I have a really bad tennis elbow as a result of the struggle to push the food through the old crop tube.

Best wishes to everyone

Love Jan

More information about Special Needs Diet

One of the most distressing illnesses in captive birds is proventricular dilatation disease. In this illness the nerves are attacked by a virus. Sometimes this shows as nervous system symptoms such as poor co-ordination. However the nerves to the gut seem to be particularly vulnerable and so the most commonly affected area is the muscular wall of the proventriculus. Without nerve stimulation of these muscles they waste away. The resulting poor digestive performance leads to a slow starvation of the bird.

Because it is a viral disease there are no treatments for PDD. However some patients do successfully fight the virus but the gut damage cannot be repaired. Vets are having considerable success in reducing the impact of this disease with anti-inflammatory drugs. In combination with appropriate dietary supplementation this is doing a great deal to improve the quality of life and life expectancy of many patients.

The Birdcare Company has developed an exciting food which requires very little digestive function and also contains ingredients that help the bird's natural immune system.

Special Needs Diet is a highly palatable complete food which, when mixed with water, resembles a nectar food. It is normally fed by syringe or crop tube. However the ingredients used provide much longer lasting energy than conventional diets as well as a full balance of protein, vitamins and minerals. A number of specially selected herbal extracts act as a prebiotic (help create a good environment in the gut for the beneficial bacteria to thrive), make the gut environment less attractive for many disease causing organisms and enhance the performance of the bird's natural immune system. The immune response is the PDD sufferer's only real hope of long term survival.

Special Needs Diet can be used as a complete diet or mixed with more conventional foods such as Feast soffitfood. Owners are encouraged to experiment with the balance of their bird's diet and weigh the patient regularly to identify the optimum blend.

Special Needs Diet is available worldwide by mail order (postal charges will apply) or retailers around the world. Below are indicative prices when sourced through local retailers for the UK (£s), USA (\$s) and western Europe (¤s). Please check pricing and delivery charges for your location before ordering:

360 g £12.35, US\$25.50, ¤19.70
1.5 kg £45.15, US\$95.00, ¤71.90

This information has been brought to you by:

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Dec. 23, 2004 - Went back to Dr. G today. Rafiki isn't improving on the Calcium EDTA. If he had heavy metal toxicity, he would have improved some by now on this drug. I am so confused now. If I don't do something, Rafiki will die soon. Dr. G believed if he was going to die, he would have already died. He says when you notice a bird is critically ill, they usually die right away. No answers once again.



Dec. 27, 2004 - I am starting to wonder if Rafiki might have Proventricular Dilation Disease. I have read so much about bird illnesses online, and he does have symptoms of PDD-lethargy, scant feces, polydipsia and polyuria, vomiting clear liquid, diarrhea, excessive appetite, slow crop, and small bits of undigested food in his poop. This is scary. He has almost every symptom. Dazzle had neurological symptoms, which in some birds with PDD, that's the only symptom.

Jan. 13, 2005 - I had throat surgery recently and couldn't feed Rafiki formula everyday because of the pain medicine I was on. I let him eat Harrison's pellets out of his bowl. He's been back in his cage for a couple of weeks now. I have a heat lamp on top. He screams a lot, seems to be in pain. He gets real nasty and grumpy with me when I try to get him out. This isn't like him at all. His poop looks horrible, tiny little threads with hardly any urates. I can't keep water in his water bowl, it's gone in two hours. I am ordering him a special PDD formula I found online from The Birdcare Company in Europe. I think he needs to stay off solid foods for a while to see if that helps. His crop is so slow to empty, I think he will die of an infection if he keeps eating solids. The food seems to be stuck in him. His breath even smells bad.

Jan. 23, 2005 - I got the formula in today. He won't be fed anymore solids for a while. We'll see if this helps. It's supposedly made for PDD birds, and is a nutritionally balanced and complete diet.

Feb. 6, 2005 - Good news! Rafiki has done so well on this formula. He has been on it for 100% of his diet for 2 weeks. He seems full of energy again, for the first time in months! He's chirping and being funny, and he's been up on the perch instead of on the bottom of the cage. This stuff is great! His poop looks a lot more like normal poop now. He still drinks a lot. I had to remove the water bowl 2 weeks ago, so he wouldn't drink too much. He chewed a wooden ring off one of his toys today, and nearly chewed the whole toy to splinters. He is definitely feeling much better!

Feb. 7, 2005 - Guess I spoke too soon. Rafiki's crop is slow again. He doesn't want to eat much today.

Feb. 10, 2005 - Rafiki went back to the vet late today. His crop hasn't emptied in 12 hours. I am getting very worried. I think his G.I. tract has shut down. I discussed euthanizing him with Dr. G. He asked me why I wanted to euthanize him. I told him that I didn't want him to suffer, but I was still unsure about euthanizing him. I feel like we haven't done all we can do for Rafiki. He felt so good for the past 2 weeks on the new diet, so what went wrong? The poor little bird slept through most of that vet visit. Dr. G said he didn't want to euthanize him if I was unsure about it. I also pointed out to Dr. G that

Rafiki had just finished molting and had stress bars on his feathers. This can be a sign of illness or nutritional deficiency during the time the feathers were forming. We will know after the next molt if the formula helps that.

Feb. 11, 2005 - I know what went wrong now. Rafiki passed a bunch of splinters in his poop today. He ingested quite a bit of that toy he chewed up earlier in the week. He must have been blocked up with wood. I guess with PDD, that would happen. The impaired G.I. tract can't move things through efficiently anymore, so any solid particles would stay in the crop and stomach. I have removed all the wooden perches and toys. Rafiki has always been a big chewer, but I never thought he was eating the wood until seeing it in his poop today! Unbelievable! Could it have been wood chips in his gizzard on the x-ray?

Update (Mar. 22, 2005) - Rafiki has done real well on the formula, and since I removed the wooden toys and perches. His weight has stayed a constant 158-164 grams. His beak has become so shiny and smooth. It was always real flaky and crusty. I have never seen it not peeling. This is a good sign. The formula must be good for him.

Update (April 4, 2005) - Rafiki seems to be stable. He gets formula once in the morning and once in the late afternoon. He is given water by syringe only, since he drinks so much

from the bowl. We try giving him pelleted food every couple of weeks, but he still can't digest it. He has quite a bit more undigested food in his poop now, than he did a couple of months ago. Also, if he eats a little, his crop gets very slow to empty, and he feels bad all over again. We aren't going to euthanize him. He's doing so good on the formula diet. He does miss his wooden toys. We will have to take him to the vet soon for his beak to be trimmed since he can't do it himself anymore. We try to give him a somewhat normal life. I take him out a lot for car rides, and let him go outside and enjoy the sun. I am convinced he has PDD, especially after eating solids last time. There was so much undigested food in it. I tend to spoil him a bit more lately, because I don't know if he will be alive the next morning when I uncover his cage.

Update (June 28, 2005) - Rafiki is doing real well. He looks beautiful and has kept his weight at 161 grams. As of three weeks ago, I have not tried feeding him anymore solids. He is on Special Needs Diet, and as long as he gets only that, he does real well. I believe his G.I. tract is severely damaged and this is all he can digest. I still think it's PDD. I tried giving Rafiki Celebrex for a couple of weeks in early May, but it didn't help. He's on no drugs. He gets SND three times a day in water or clear juice. He also gets ginger, alfalfa, dandelion, kelp, and powdered barley juice. I no longer give him Harrison's avian enzymes. I did that only after the times I let him eat a little solids to help him digest it, but it seems that he doesn't need them with SND. He digests it fine on his own.

Notes

1. Because April did not know The Birdcare Company existed at this stage, we were not involved in Dazzle's case. Whilst the CNS version of PDD or epilepsy are both possible causes the symptoms described are, in our opinion, classic ones of calcium deficiency. When we analyse the cases referred to our BirdVet Online service about 70% show symptoms consistent with calcium deficiency. Vet research in the USA suggests that 98% of pet birds there get less than the recommended levels of calcium in their diet. We believe that effective supplementation with CalciBoost is advisable for all pet birds.

2. White blood cells are the body's 'Rapid Reaction Force'. Billions of them are produced to help repel all sorts of infectious organisms. Why would anyone want to reduce the level of white blood cells in an infected patient? Our approach

is to support the production and effectiveness of white blood cells with our 'white cell support system' which is incorporated into our products Guardian Angel and Survive. Interestingly a recent veterinary seminar was held in the UK titled 'Not all birds suffer from Baytril deficiency' which suggests that some vets agree with us!

Drugs are only effective against specific target organisms. The immune system has a far broader spectrum of activity. Be delighted if the white cell count is high - the bird is already dealing with the disease so give it support not drugs that will impair white cell production. This does not mean that certain conditions do not benefit from drugs but the routine use of broad spectrum anti-bacterials should be considered most carefully if we are to reduce the prevalence of 'superbugs' in our animal and human populations.

Malcolm Green - Director, The Birdcare Company

GEORGIE

LIVING WITH PDD SINCE FEBRUARY 2003

This article dated 1st July 2005

Georgie, my beloved Moluccan Cockatoo aged 12, was diagnosed with PDD by crop biopsy in February 2003 - in March 2003 he gave up eating. As a result I first crop fed Georgie on Special Needs Diet from The Birdcare Company in March 2003 in an attempt to keep him alive. Georgie gained weight over a period of time (about 25%) and his condition dramatically improved as a direct result of his new diet. Georgie is now an extremely cuddly, happy, noisy, healthy and incredibly mischievous Moluccan cockatoo with so much character, along with perfect feather condition. He has had several injuries during this period resulting in extensive veterinary treatment including surgery and fortunately has sailed through all treatments magnificently as if he was a 'well' parrot. Georgie now weighs around 950-1000 grams and is fed every 4 hours on 80% Special Needs Diet mixed with 20% ground Feast administered by crop tube. Georgie has around 20-22 spoons of SND each day and continues to refuse any seed, pellets, human food, etc. His only

other indulgence is a little fruit and very occasionally a tiny piece of dunked digestive biscuit. His bloodwork was checked recently and I was advised his bloods were satisfactory, therefore needing no extra medication apart from his usual Celebrex - I was instructed to continue with the excellent work! I have lost count of the number of 1.5 KG tubs of Special Needs Diet I have used on Georgie but I believe it to be in the region of 25 (gosh, that's 82.5 lbs of SND



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for one little 2 lb parrot). To date none of my other 3 Moluccans (who are all in very close contact with Georgie) have shown any signs of contracting PDD.

Georgie continues to survive PDD against all odds some 29 months after its initial onset, which I am led to believe is an incredible achievement and by all accounts a miracle. His quality of life continues to fulfill him completely, he is the noisiest, naughtiest and most mischievous parrot of all my 4 Moluccans and continues to be the most cuddly, affectionate and loving parrot I and my friends have ever experienced. Georgie has on many occasions tried to mate with my female Baby whom he is extremely bonded with (they have been together since babyhood).

Georgie recently took part in an Animal Open Day for Unusual Pets and proved to be the star of the show due to his amazing performance, cuddliness and outrageously naughty and mischievous behaviour together with his 135 db screams and excellent talking ability - everyone who experienced Georgie fell totally in love with him. It seemed to everyone, especially Georgie, he was born to perform and did so with such vigour and enthusiasm! The avian vet who first diagnosed and treated Georgie for PDD saw him at this Open Day and said he was in unbelievable and incredible condition (he had not seen Georgie for around 18 months as I had moved home and changed to a different avian vet).

Once again thank you Birdcare so sincerely for giving me the last 29 months of such special joy and precious times with my beloved Georgie - I know it is only Birdcare's products that have kept him alive for all of this time despite his fatal condition.

With so much gratitude forever.

Yours sincerely

Janet M Worsley

The new crop tube you sent last week makes my life so much easier - why did I not have it 2 years ago?? I only ordered it as I wanted a spare just in case I lost the original one. I thought I had lost it a couple of weeks ago when I took Georgie to perform at his Open Day but fortunately found it - what a panic that was. It was a Saturday evening and Georgie had not been crop fed since first thing that morning in all the pandemonium!

The bore in the new crop tube is larger - almost twice the size I would guess and the mixture goes down the crop tube with so little effort - have to be careful not to do it too fast! How could I have struggled so much for more than two years! I have a really bad tennis elbow as a result of the struggle to push the food through the old crop tube.

Best wishes to everyone

Love Jan

More information about Special Needs Diet

One of the most distressing illnesses in captive birds is proventricular dilatation disease. In this illness the nerves are attacked by a virus. Sometimes this shows as nervous system symptoms such as poor co-ordination. However the nerves to the gut seem to be particularly vulnerable and so the most commonly affected area is the muscular wall of the proventriculus. Without nerve stimulation of these muscles they waste away. The resulting poor digestive performance leads to a slow starvation of the bird.

Because it is a viral disease there are no treatments for PDD. However some patients do successfully fight the virus but the gut damage cannot be repaired. Vets are having considerable success in reducing the impact of this disease with anti-inflammatory drugs. In combination with appropriate dietary supplementation this is doing a great deal to improve the quality of life and life expectancy of many patients.

The Birdcare Company has developed an exciting food which requires very little digestive function and also contains ingredients that help the bird's natural immune system.

Special Needs Diet is a highly palatable complete food which, when mixed with water, resembles a nectar food. It is normally fed by syringe or crop tube. However the ingredients used provide much longer lasting energy than conventional diets as well as a full balance of protein, vitamins and minerals. A number of specially selected herbal extracts act as a prebiotic (help create a good environment in the gut for the beneficial bacteria to thrive), make the gut environment less attractive for many disease causing organisms and enhance the performance of the bird's natural immune system. The immune response is the PDD sufferer's only real hope of long term survival.

Special Needs Diet can be used as a complete diet or mixed with more conventional foods such as Feast sofffood. Owners are encouraged to experiment with the balance of their bird's diet and weigh the patient regularly to identify the optimum blend.

Special Needs Diet is available worldwide by mail order (postal charges will apply) or retailers around the world. Below are indicative prices when sourced through local retailers for the UK (£s), USA (\$s) and western Europe (¤s). Please check pricing and delivery charges for your location before ordering:

360 g £12.35, US\$25.50, ¤19.70
1.5 kg £45.15, US\$95.00, ¤71.90

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