Healthy Herps: How to Examine at Home

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Because routine cage maintenance is necessary to keep a safe and healthy home for your herp, your daily cleaning routine offers the perfect opportunity to spend some extra time to carefully examine your pet. Close personal observations help you tailor your cleaning routine to match the needs of your herp, as well as detect any abnormal behavior or early signs of illness. **When observing your herp, ask yourself the following questions:**

- Has the normal amount of food been eaten?
- Is the temperature of the cage within proper parameters?
- Are the feces and urates normal in appearance and quantity?
- Has there been any sheddings? Does it appear normal?
- Is there any evidence of parasites?
    - **Mites -** appear as small brown, red, or black spots around your reptile's eyes, between scales, or moving over the animal's skin.
    - **Ticks -** are slightly larger than mites and are brown, black, or gray in color.
    - **Internal parasitic infections -** are often signaled by severe weight loss or changes in the feces.
- Are there any edges or sharp corners that can injure your pet?
- Are there any injuries? Look for bites, scratches, discoloration, swelling, sores, or discharge.
- Are the eyes clear?
- Is the overall appearance of your herp healthy? Check eyes, ears, nose, legs, tail, and skin to see if your reptile looks healthy.

During your observations, if you notice something out of the ordinary consult with your reptile veterinarian first before trying to remedy health related issues.

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We Recommend

ReptiRain
Maintains humidity level vital to good health.

ReptiSafe Conditioner
Removes harmful chemicals like ammonia, cloramine, and chlorine from water while adding essential ions and electrolytes.

Deluxe Shovel Scooper
Simple spot-cleaning extends the life of your substrate.

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