



State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals
Center for Community Health

INFORMATION FOR PERSONS PURCHASING AND/OR CARING FOR BIRDS

Persons who purchase or acquire birds as pets should adhere to the following guidelines on safe bird handling:

- Bird habitats should be located in areas free from extreme temperature changes or drafts, and out of direct sunlight. The bird habitat should NEVER be placed in or near the kitchen, or in an area where cooking fumes can be inhaled.
- Specific recommendations are available regarding adequate cage size for different sized birds. Most pet shops are aware of these recommendations and should be consulted to ensure an optimum environment for the pet.
- Birds can be bathed, however bathing procedures should be as follows:
 - Provide the bird with water in a shallow bowl at least once per week. Birds can also be encouraged to preen their feathers by spraying the bird with a fine mist once weekly. **Make sure to utilize warm (not hot or cold) or room temperature water!**
- Food and clean water should be provided at all times and should be replenished continuously.
- Water bowls and food bowls should be thoroughly cleaned daily.
- Habitats should be thoroughly cleaned each week.

PSITTACOSIS is a bacterial disease that can sometimes be transmitted from birds to people. The best means of protection against human infection from birds is to take sick animals to the veterinarian. Remember that the signs of psittacosis in birds are watery eyes and nostrils, and weakness. If a pet bird exhibits these signs, take the bird to a veterinarian.

Following the above safe bird handling guidelines and practicing good personal hygiene will reduce the risk of human infection.

The above information was provided by the State Public Health Veterinarian.
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