Controlling Ferret Body Odor

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

"This ferret has been descented and it still stinks!" Descenting does nothing to change ferret body odor. The musk (anal) glands, which are the glands removed during descenting, produce a secretion with a strong, unpleasant odor different from the typical ferret body scent. Most kits sold in pet shops are both descented and spayed or neutered when sold. When these kits are adopted, the ferret body odor associated with them can be controlled by keeping them and their environment clean.

Some people find the innate odor of the ferret offensive. In breeding season, uncastrated males and females in heat have a very pungent body odor associated with their very greasy skin secretion. Spayed or neutered animals have only a faint ferret odor. If you object to the smell of a clean baby ferret, you might consider adopting a different kind of pet.

Keeping the cage and litter box clean minimizes ferret muskiness. Wash the sleeping tube or bedding once a week, and remove the waste from the litter box once or twice daily.

bathe their ferret once a week. There is some danger of causing dry, itchy skin with frequent baths. Never use dish-washing detergents. Select gentle products such as cat shampoos and conditioners, or one of the special ferret shampoos and coat conditioners on the market.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*