

Prolapsed Rectum

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Ferrets that have diarrhea sometimes strain until the soft pink lining of the rectum is pushed through the anal opening. This is common in juvenile ferrets with [proliferative colitis](#), a severe inflammation of the lower intestine caused by a bacterial infection. Prolapsed rectum also occurs sometimes in young kits soon after arrival at pet shops. Usually the cause is the dry diet that the kits eat in large quantities because they are hungry after their long trip. It is rarely associated with [descenting](#) when the surgery is properly done in a young ferret.

A prolapsed rectum not accompanied by severe diarrhea is not an emergency unless the ferret feels so irritated that he begins to chew the prolapse, which can cause profuse hemorrhage. If a newly acquired kit has a small prolapse, give a half inch of cat [laxative](#) paste twice a day, and with a lubricated finger, gently push the prolapse back into the rectum.

The prolapse will often vanish spontaneously within 48 hours. Make sure the kit has water available and consider feeding him a soft diet for a few days, by mixing his pellets with warm water.

Severe diarrhea may cause prolapsed rectum. This is an emergency, and the ferret should be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible.