

# DEHYDRATION KILLS BIRDS

## Spark Provides The Answer!

To dehydrate something you remove the moisture from it - this is exactly what happens to the dehydrated bird, its moisture is removed. Once water is reduced in the body then organs cannot operate normally, now disease can strike.

Spark is a unique formula electrolyte that is vital in the prevention and treatment of the dehydrated bird. This formula contains body salts that shift water from the gut into the blood. Spark also contains the highly efficient energy source MALTADEXTRAN. As all the dehydrated birds are short of energy the use of Maltadextran speeds recovery. Maltadextrans are long chains of glucose molecules specially linked together. In the gut the links are broken and the glucose is absorbed into the blood. The great advantage of Maltadextrans is the prolonged glucose release giving a continuous energy source.

When a bird loses body water, its blood flow to muscles alters and fluid is withdrawn from that muscle tissue to maintain blood volume. Once water is taken from a muscle it can no longer function properly and so the bird cannot fly. Birds in this state, even without infection, toxins or starvation are less able to fly and cope with stress. The sudden weight loss that we see in the sick bird is not protein loss, in fact the vast bulk of this is body water. Surprisingly birds can lose up to 30% of their body water and appear normal. By the time we see the weight loss the bird is in serious trouble.

Spark is easy to prepare, readily accepted by birds and is a good example of "prevention is cheaper than treatment". Most birds that are taken to veterinarians as emergencies have a history of inadequate water intake and can be assumed to be dehydrated - early fluid replacement with Spark by birdkeepers will help the bird replace fluid without interfering in treatments.

Veterinarians have several ways of giving fluids, under the skin, into the muscle, into the vein and even into the marrow cavity of bones. These are not things that the average birdkeeper can do, however all birdkeepers can give oral Spark. The addition of Spark to the drinking water before stress periods is a simple dehydration prevention method. Birdkeepers can predict when their birds will be stressed, e.g. shows, shipping, handling, moving aviaries etc. If their water is treated with Spark for a few days prior to the stress their body is better able to cope.

In the emergency situation of the sick bird the best method to give Spark is via a crop needle. This simple procedure is a "must" for all birdkeepers. Crop needling is quick, safe and effective. The fluids are given directly to the crop where they are taken up rapidly. The other critical factor when treating sick birds is the Hospital Cage - all sick birds must go in a hospital cage. When in the hospital cage the constant supply of Spark will greatly improve the birds' ability to recover. This is given by crop needle when the bird is critical and then in the water as the bird begins to recover. The use of the Vetafarm Medication Drinker will help to accurately determine the daily water intake which should be approximately 6mL per 100g body weight.

Rather than try to determine if the bird is dehydrated, you are better to assume all sick, injured or stressed birds are dehydrated and give them Spark.

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