

BIRD & EXOTIC ANIMAL VETERINARY SERVICES (Bruce Maclean BSc, BVM & S, MRCVS)



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Information sheet B 01 – Birds & Fumes

It is very important to be aware that birds are generally very much more sensitive to airborne toxins and fumes than we are, and fume-related breathing problems in birds are in my experience more common than infectious causes. This sensitivity means that birds may be badly affected long before we can smell anything.

It is very difficult to give an exhaustive list of possible causes of fume-related breathing problems in birds, but some of the more common ones are below.

- Smoking
- Cooking fumes (particularly from teflon non-stick utensils, but others are possible)
- Paint
- Air fresheners
- Deodorants/perfumes
- Hairspray (N.B. bird sitting on shoulder)
- Glues
- Nail polish and remover
- Disinfectants (ammonia, strong bleach)
- Fumes from boilers
- Car exhaust
- Allergens? – while not proven, many bird vets feel that parrots can suffer from reactions to airborne allergens such as pollens

Preventing problems

Avoiding exposure to potential sources of problems is of course the way to prevent problems.