Reviewed November 2023

infection which can either depress the white blood cell count eg Psittacine Beak and Feather
Disease (PBFD) or elevate the white blood cell count eg psittacosis (avian chlamydia). Separate
tests for chlamydia (psittacosis) or PBFD

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(unlike the light we have in our homes which contains no UV). In addition to sex identification certain
fruits and berries have different colours in the UV spectrum which help a bird tell if they are edible or ripe.
Birds (especially Grey parrots) require UV light to convert vitamin D precursors in their skin allowing
normal calcium absorption to take place.

Sunlight will contain no UV if it is shining through a window as the glass does not permit passage of the
UV part of the spectrum. We recommend the provision of a bird UV light such as the Arcadia bird lamp
system. Timers can be used to ensure the light goes on 1 hour after sunrise and turns off 1 hour before
sunset - usually approximately 10-12 hours of light per day. Clamps can be used to attach these lights to
the top of the cage and reflectors to better concentrate the beam in the bird’s direction. Make sure your
parrot cannot chew on the wires! The bulb must be changed every 6 months – although they will still emit
light that we can see, the UV component wanes to negligible levels after 6-12 months.

It is very important to ensure your bird gets enough sleep, usually around 12 hours per night. You can
either move your bird to a quiet, dark room or cover the bird’s cage with a blanket to cut out light
exposure. Just ensure there is no background noise to keep your bird awake! Excessive light can disrupt
sleep patterns and cause hormonal changes connected with reproduction leading to frustration-based
feather plucking.

Bathing or spraying:
Encourage your bird to preen normally by gently misting once or twice daily with warm water. Many birds
also enjoy a bath in a shallow dish of water or may even enjoy access to the shower.

Environmental toxins:
Do not allow smoking around the bird or the use of incense, plug in air fresheners or other aerosols. The
fumes from overheated Teflon pans can be fatal to birds.

Diagnostic tests, environmental management and potential treatments all take time, so it is important
to be committed to the process. Even with the most dedicated management and appropriate