

## Health and welfare information about your rodent from Vetlexicon Rodent.



### Traumatic injuries in hamsters

Hamsters are easily injured. They are frequently dropped while being handled (especially by children), or after they bite. Pet hamsters allowed “freedom of the house” (even for very short periods) are often stepped on or kicked and seriously injured or killed.

#### What injuries are commonly seen in hamsters?

Hamsters are frequently injured while inside an “exercise ball.”

This is a clear plastic sphere that is propelled along the floor by the action of the hamster running inside it. Injuries occur when a person accidentally kicks the ball or when it falls down a flight of stairs.

Hamsters often perish when they are forgotten and left in these devices without food and water. In spite of the clever design and obvious benefits of this device, hamster owners must continually supervise its use.

Parents must be made aware by their children that it is in use. Above all, hamsters shouldn't be forgotten while inside these devices.

Trauma may result in broken bones and/or serious internal injuries or death.

### **What happens if my hamster breaks a bone?**

Injured hamsters should be immediately examined by your vet as broken bones are very difficult to treat and manage.

A fall of over just a foot or more can result in a broken back. A broken back can be treated, but this depends on the severity of the break.

Often an appliance, eg a splint, to mobilize the broken bone will not be applied because of the sometimes greater problems they impose on the broken limb.

Your vet will determine the best course of action in each situation.