Staphylococcus  
Staphylococcus In Your Breeding Room: Infection - Symptoms - Healing

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While I have a great number of interesting reports concerning Budgerigar breeding, genetics, feeding methods, etc, in my literature collection, I miss reports on Budgerigar diseases and most important of all on their cures. This is why I would like to rouse myself and inform the reader about the attack of Staphylococci and the successful treatment of these bacteria.

In the spring of 1986 I had to ascertain after the breeding of about 50 birds, that their quality was appalling.

Thus I procured another batch from a well-known breeder. I bought one cock and three hens. The quality of the birds was excellent; however, it was obvious that hygiene did not play an important role for the breeder. Yet still I yearned for these animals, as it is typical for beginners. At home, I placed the birds in a breeding box with the provision of food and water. I took care to ascertain the separation between the newly bought and the other birds. On entering the breedingroom the next day, I became aware of a penetrate smell similar to that of a pigsty. There was no doubt about it, the cause were the excrements of the new birds.

The scent however dissipated a few days later and consequently I placed the newly acquired birds together with the others. This was the beginning of a perfect catastrophe.

Shortly after, I fail to reminisce; it came to my attention that the birds were suffering from diarrhea. Having fed them carrots the day before, I saw the probable cause in this fact. I bought carbide tablets and mixed them with the bird feed. An automatic improvement was noticeable, but not for long. After 8 days the trouble commenced again. I also noticed that the birds let their wings hang loosely or simply rested them on their perch. A few days later these particular ones had dark green smeared and sticky anuses. They became thinner and refused to eat. After this, the first birds died. Amongst the remaining sick were the four newly acquired birds. They however only had green smeary diarrhea, like some birds have at exhibitions. The skinny ones were hens, which had had their broods and young birds that had experienced their first moult. I tried again, but in vain to wax a cure with the help of carbide tablets. My last hope was the antibiotic 'Tetraseptin' that can also be applied to psittacosis. The effect was disastrous. The severely stricken birds died successively. During a conversation with a doctor practicing at the Ludwig-Maxi- milian-University, Institute for Poultry and Bird Diseases, in Oberschleissheim, I was informed that Staphylococci were resistant against most antibiotics, and that the already weakened intestinal flora was almost utterly destroyed as a result.

To be brief, I notified the responsible Veterinarian. Excrement samples were sent to the institute in Oberschleissheim at once. After a short while I received the first results: "Destroyed intestinal flora - infection due to "Staphylococci".

After a series of tests, an existing antibiotic was discovered which killed Staphylococci successfully. The Veterinary assured me, that healing the birds would not be so easy. The intestinal flora had to be brought into working order. He advised me to feed urgently the birds with yogurts containing Bacteria cultures. I had to produce the yogurt myself. How I was to feed the birds with the yogurt was yet an untackled problem.

I finally found a solution, with the help of a syringe with a valve hose attached to the end of it,I force fed the birds each with 1.1/2 ml two times daily. I noted no signs of vomiting. After two days the Budgerigars were much stronger. Also the consumption of bird feed increased. Now the remedy against Staphylococci could be applied, the remedy being Chloramphenicol in a 5% solution. The mixture was put in the drinking bowls. After not knowing the mixing proportions, I had to look up medical books till I found the answer in Dr. Kronburger's book "vogelkrankheiten". The mixture to be put in the drinking bowls was proportioned in the ratio 4 ml of the 5% Chleramphenicol solution to a litre of water,14 days later the tragedy was over.

After an extra thorough cleaning of the aviary, the sickness seemed to have disappeared. This proved to be misleading. Again, after a few weeks, a few birds had weak wings and smeared anuses. After a single and consequent treatment with Chloramphenicol the normal and healthy conditions of the birds were restored. During the treatment I noticed that the two fairly newly acquired hen birds always had slight diarrhea and yet were quite fat. I began to suspect that these two were the cause of this curse.

As after four months the disease kept remaining I acted upon my suspicion and disposed of the two birds. I was right! The disease never plagued me again. Today I can report this pestering incident with a humorous undertone, yet at that time I certainly was at the end of my tether.

The Home production of Yogurt!

Highly pasteurized yogurt, bought in stores, is useless, as all the helpful bacteria are absent. These are yet very important for the successful treatment of diseased intestinal flora. There are two production methods:

1: This is the easier and the safer one. This method includes the use of a yogurt machine consisting of six 118-litre containers and a heating plate. (The machine can be bought in every department store for home-use electrical appliances). Application: The six containers are filled to three fourths with very fresh dairy milk. Then normal bio-yogurt (without any additions) is supplemented in each of the six containers till they are full. These are then closed tightly and heated for 18 hours. If not in use, the filled glasses with the newly produced yogurt are to be placed in the refrigerator. Before using, it is advised to have the containers (not more than one is needed usually) standing for a few hours to attain room temperature. It is also advised to retain one glass of yogurt for the next production. So as to keep the production costs low.

2: Normal glass containers which can be procured easily (e.g. jam-glasses) are filled to 3/4 full with milk and 1/4 with normal bio-yogurt and placed in an area of warmth 30'C to 40'C. It takes a bit longer than the first method, but yogurt is guaranteed.