

# GASTROINTESTINAL STASIS IN RABBITS

THE SILENT KILLER

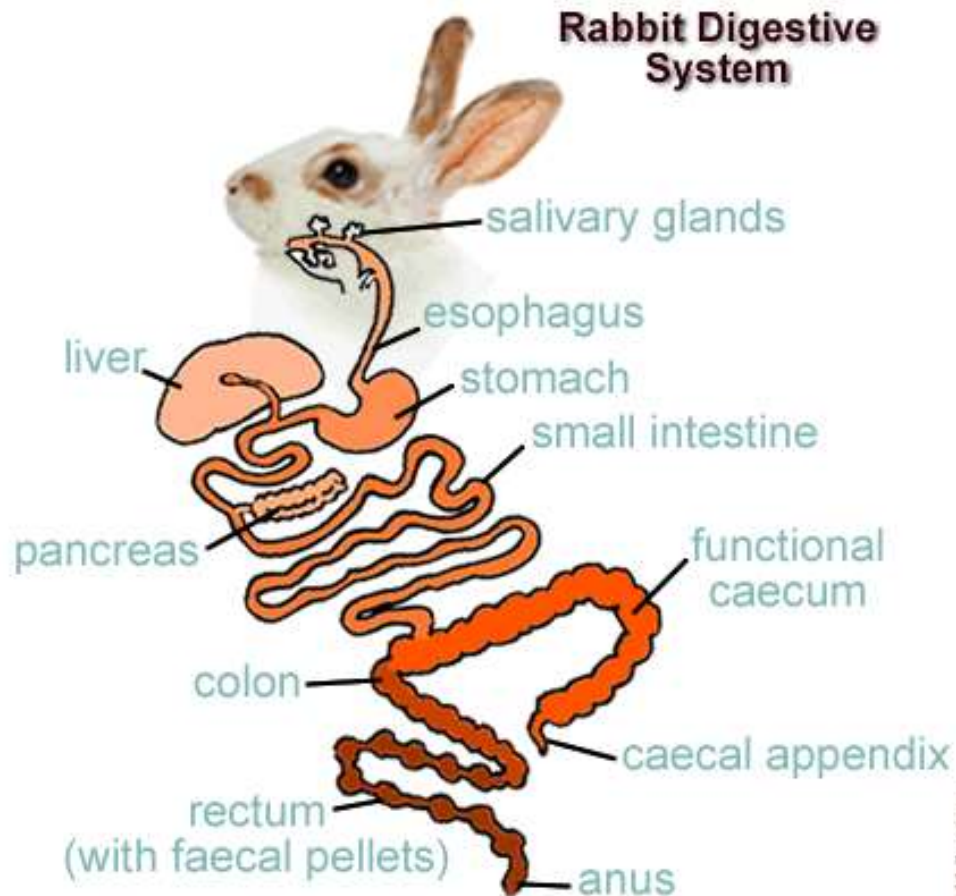
## MEET 'SPECS'

- ◉ 1 year old, male entire
- ◉ Indoor rabbit
- ◉ Fed mainly on muesli with some green vegetables
- ◉ 3 day history of being quiet
- ◉ 24 hours without eating
- ◉ Clinical examination: uncomfortable on abdominal palpation, hunched appearance, dehydrated, lack of borborygmi, temp 36.9



THIS IS AN EMERGENCY

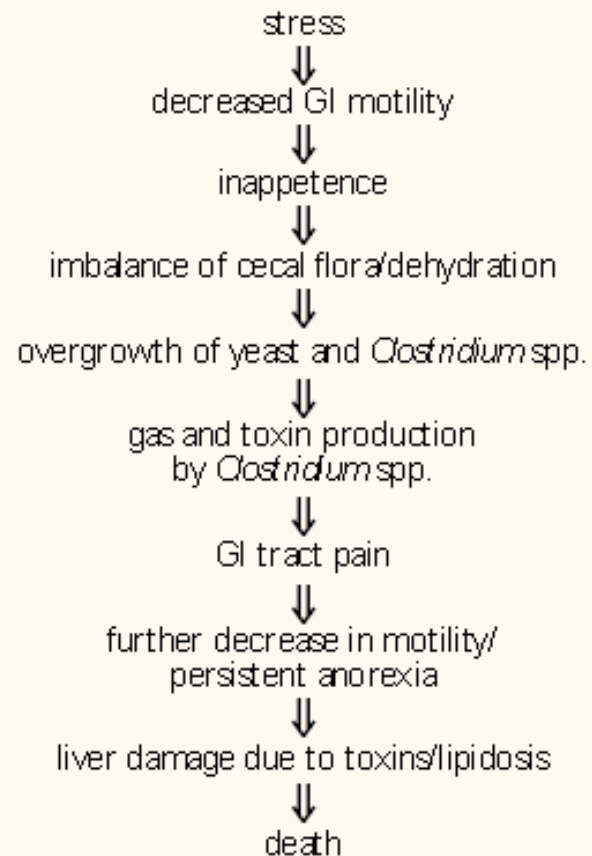
# BACK TO BASICS: ANATOMY



# WHAT IS GUT STASIS?

- Motility of the gut stops due to the incorrect diet or build up of gas or toxins
- If there isn't motility present then the rabbit won't eat
- If the rabbit doesn't eat it won't produce faeces
- If there aren't any faeces there isn't the bacteria to break down the food

## Downward Cascade of Factors Related to Ileus



# CLINICAL SIGNS

- ◉ Hunched stance
- ◉ Anorexia
- ◉ Reluctance to move - uncomfortable on abdominal palpation
- ◉ Lack of faecal output
- ◉ Bruxing (clenching and grinding teeth)
- ◉ Increased respiratory rate
- ◉ Absence of borborygmi
- ◉ Hypothermia

# EMERGENCY MEDICATION

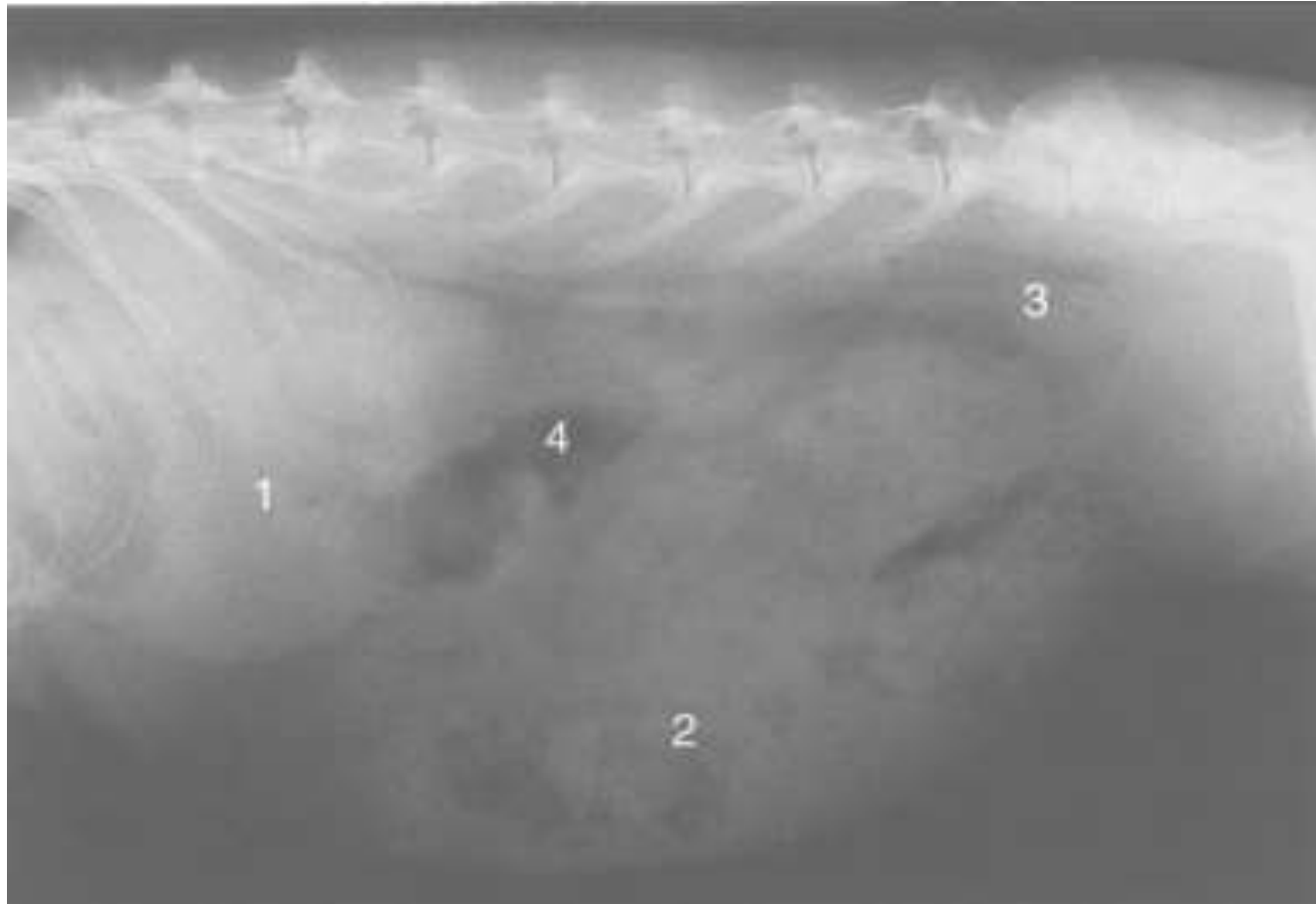
- ◉ Correct hypothermia
- ◉ Analgesia - buprenorphine
- ◉ Pro-motility drug - ranitidine + metacloprimide
- ◉ IV and SC fluids - Hartmens
- ◉ Critical Care Feed - Oxbow

# FURTHER DIAGNOSTICS

- ◉ Radiographs
- ◉ Dental examination
- ◉ Blood test
- ◉ Urinalysis



# RADIOGRAPHY



Normal radiograph of Rabbit's abdomen

(Brown, 2002)

# GASTRIC DILATION



(Brown, 2002)

# DENTAL EXAMINATION



# DENTAL DISEASE



# BLOOD SAMPLES AND URINALYSIS

- ◉ Sample from marginal ear vein, saphenous or cephalic veins
- ◉ Up to 10ml of blood can be taken
- ◉ Haematology and Biochemistry
- ◉ Electrolytes useful in critically ill rabbits
- ◉ Urinalysis - rule out renal disease

# BACK TO SPECS

- ⦿ Emergency drugs administered
- ⦿ Radiographs normal
- ⦿ Dental examination revealed spur on lower left molar
- ⦿ Diet needs to be addressed

# SUMMERISE

- ◉ Gut stasis is a medical emergency
- ◉ Temperature is key to prognosis
- ◉ Stabilisation primarily before any further investigations
- ◉ Rule out any underlying sources
- ◉ Make sure the rabbit is on a good quality diet

# REFERENCES

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- ◉ Krempus, ‘Ileus in Domestic Rabbits’ [rabbitcare.org/ileus.pdf](http://rabbitcare.org/ileus.pdf)
- ◉ Yorsten, ‘Gastrointestinal Stasis in Rabbits’ 2013, 26-29