



THE CENTER FOR

BIRD & EXOTIC ANIMAL MEDICINE

YOUR NEW BABY BIRD

Congratulations on your new baby bird. This is the beginning of a relationship that is full of possibilities and challenges.

-The first step in this relationship is getting your new bird settled into your home and your routine.

*This is both very exciting and a bit stressful.

-Young, recently weaned birds often present a special challenge to bird owners unfamiliar with birds' unique body language. Hopefully our experiences can help you both through this transition.

First, get all the information you can from the bird's current caretaker:

- a. What is it eating now?
- b. If it is still hand feeding:
 - Exactly how has the formula been mixed (wet/dry ratio)?
 - What formula temperature does the bird like?
 - How much (cc's or ounces) does the bird usually take per feeding?
 - How often is it being hand fed?
 - Does it still have a strong feeding response?
 - How do they hold the bird's head when hand feeding?
- c. How long has it been off hand feeding?
- d. What do the bird's normal droppings look like?
 - i.e. relative proportion and color of urine ring, solid white urates, dark feces (knowing this normal appearance will enable you to judge how much your bird is really consuming)
- e. Is it perching well? Is it still sleeping on the bottom of the cage?
- f. Is it used to being covered at night?
- g. Is it used to a supplemental heat source?
 - if so, how is it set up and what is the temperature in the cage or box?

Babies will often "regress" a bit during times of stress, such as a move to a new home. This means that a recently weaned baby may not want to eat his "grown up foods" as well as before and that he may make begging/crying sounds and motions. Watch his droppings to see if he is

eating enough. The feces should be prominent in most droppings. Small, dark green feces in the majority of the droppings indicate the bird is not eating a sufficient amount. If you suspect that this is the case, here are some suggestions to jump-start him again:

- a. Offer him his foods from your fingers.
- b. Offer him warm moist foods - oatmeal, baked sweet potatoes, well-cooked rice, vegetables, macaroni and cheese.
- c. Offer him small amounts frequently (rather than large bowls, full)
- d. Offer his food on the cage bottom rather than perch level bowls.
- e. Offer him food while you are eating the same thing (parrots are social eaters and learn what to eat from the flock - **“YOU”**).
- f. Return to increased numbers of hand feedings each day for awhile (**ONLY** with proper instruction from us or his previous feeder)
- g. Check his chest musculature - it should be gently rounded, not very pointed. A baby that is too thin will not wean and will often not eat enough to regain weight. Some weight loss is to be expected as the youngster learns to eat on his own, but he should not be “rail thin”.

~ Have a “well baby” check up. A baby with even a mild bacterial or yeast infection will often beg incessantly and refuse to wean.

~ When in doubt, keep a written chart to remind you of what you are seeing.

You may be able to detect developing patterns. Something like:

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Amt fed</u>	<u>#Droppings/feces</u>	<u>Attitude</u>
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