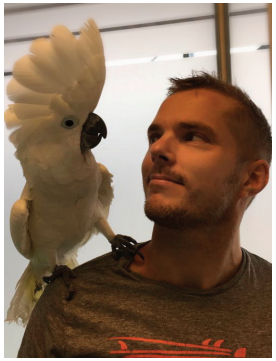

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ANAESTHESIA IN BIRDS

In avian medicine, anaesthesia is a common procedure. Besides for surgery, anaesthesia might be necessary for physical examination or diagnostic procedures. Because of their physical en physiological properties, birds are prone to severe complications (hypoglycaemia, hypothermia, hypotension and a suboptimal ventilation) and death during anaesthesia.

Ideally, the health status of the bird should be checked before surgery. Because of their natural instinct to hide physical problems, normal behaviour doesn't rule out health issues. Medical history should be taken and a pre-anaesthetic physical examination should (if possible) be performed to identify risk factors for anaesthesia. Optimally, risk factors should be minimized before anaesthesia, for example by fluid therapy, warmth support and correcting the metabolic status of the avian patient.

A component of anaesthesia is analgesia. Although birds tend to show pain less then mammals, pain relief is as important in birds as it is in mammals. Besides the fact that pain is of course very discomforting, it can also increase the risk of anaesthesia and cause postoperative problems.

For analgesia, premedication, induction and maintenance multiple drugs can be used. Effects and side effects can differ from those in mammals and vary between different avian species.

General avian properties, species-dependent properties and the type of procedure should be taken into consideration when making an anaesthetic plan.

During the anaesthesia, body temperature, circulation and ventilation should be supported and monitored closely to minimize complications. Most deaths during anaesthesia occur because of a depressed ventilation, especially during the recovery.