

FINDING FURTHER  
INFORMATION ON ADV

**Web Sites**

[www.metroferret.com](http://www.metroferret.com)

[www.ferret.org/aleutian.htm](http://www.ferret.org/aleutian.htm)

[www.ferretcentral.org](http://www.ferretcentral.org)

[animalsforawareness.org/aleutian.htm](http://animalsforawareness.org/aleutian.htm)

[www.geocities.com/russiansmom](http://www.geocities.com/russiansmom)

**News Groups**

[Advferret@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Advferret@yahoogroups.com)

[Smartgroups.com/groups/ferrethealth](http://Smartgroups.com/groups/ferrethealth)

**Reference Papers by:**

Dr. Richard Nye

Dr. M.A. Stevenson

Dr. M.E. Bloom

**ADV Testing Supplies**

Avecon Diagnostics, Inc.

Telephone 800.249.5875

[www.avecon.com](http://www.avecon.com)

United Vaccines, Inc.

Telephone 800.283.6465



This is Pudge. She is a happy, healthy, ADV+ ferret. So pretty they made her into a stamp!

  
**A Non-Profit  
Organization**

*If you have an ADV+ household, and  
you are interested in possibly adopting,  
fostering, or sponsoring an ADV+  
shelter ferret, please contact us today!*

**Local Contact:**



**Metropolitan NY/  
NJ Ferret Welfare  
Society, Inc.**

33 Arrowhead Drive

Neshanic Station NJ 08853

Web: <http://www.metroferret.com>

E-mail : [admin@metroferret.com](mailto:admin@metroferret.com)

Federal 501©(3) Not-for-Profit Organization

Federal EIN 22-3684207

NJ Charities Registration: CH-1582700

NJ Tax Exempt ID 223-684-207/000

NY Charities Registration 20-21-82

NY Tax Exempt ID EX230833

*This brochure is provided in an effort to increase the awareness of  
ADV, and is only a general overview. The document can be freely  
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in the space provided above. No other alterations are permitted.*

  
**ALEUTIAN'S  
DISEASE VIRUS  
AND  
YOUR FERRET**

General Awareness information on ADV  
Provided by:

**Metropolitan NY/  
NJ Ferret Welfare  
Society, Inc.**



**Metro Ferret**  
[www.metroferret.com](http://www.metroferret.com)

## ALEUTIAN'S DISEASE VIRUS (ADV)

Aleutian's Mink Disease Virus is a sneaky viral illness that can infect ferrets. It's not a new virus, but the occurrences are on the rise in our area. ADV is a hardy parvo-virus that can live outside of its host for quite a long time. It is currently known to infect ferrets, minks, skunk, and raccoons. It is not known to be contagious to humans, or other common household pets, such as cats and dogs.

Other than several vague symptoms and how to diagnose ADV, not much is really known about the disease. There is research ongoing at this time, but a treatment, cure or vaccine is not yet known.

### How is ADV transmitted?

It is suspected that ADV can be transmitted by bodily fluids; saliva, urine, feces, and during birthing from the mother to the kits. It is also suspected that the disease can be transmitted via contaminated surface contact, or that it may even be airborne.

It has been known that ADV+ ferrets can live with ADV negative ferrets, and not transmit the disease for long periods of time, if at all. The incubation period is unknown, and transmission is not a given.

It is theorized that ADV may be 'shed' at certain times by positive ferrets, at which time other ferrets may become infected. It is also possible that an ADV+ ferret will never show any clinical signs of the disease.

### What can happen to my Ferret if he/she is ADV+ ?

A ferret that tests positive for Aleutian's may never show any signs of the disease. However, the disease is still contagious. When and if ADV symptoms occur, they may include progressive hind leg weakness, muscle wasting, lethargy, tremors, and tarry feces. Further symptoms may include enlarged spleen, immune system dysfunction, vascular degeneration and possibly death. Kidney and liver failure are the most common causes of ADV-related deaths.

It should be noted that many ADV+ ferrets live a long and healthy life, and often die of other illnesses, such as Adrenal Disease, Insulinoma, or Lymphoma, which are quite common in all ferrets.

### Is there a test for ADV?

There are several relatively inexpensive tests available to screen your ferrets for ADV. The easiest to use is available from Avecon Diagnostics, and involves only collection of saliva. The results are available within 10 minutes. You can order the test kit and administer it yourself, without a vet visit. Avecon also offers another test needing blood collection. There are also tests available from United Vaccines, requiring blood sample collection, and mailing the test in. Results will be mailed and e-mail to the submitter. The back of this form has the contact information for testing supplies.

### Why should I test my ferret ?

Knowledge is power. The only option that we have at this time is to try to prevent the transmission

and spread of the disease. If you are a ferret owner, we suggest that you test all of your ferrets, for your benefit as well as the benefit of the rest of the ferret community.

If your ferret becomes sick, and you already know that they are ADV+, you are ahead of the game. Since the general symptoms could be indications of so many different things, a vet may run hundreds of dollars worth of tests before the actual disease is identified.

By knowing your ferret's ADV status now, you can help to prevent the spread of the disease. You can also give yourself time to investigate the disease in greater detail.

### What should I do if my ferret tests positive for ADV?

First of all, DON'T PANIC! This is still the same ferret that you know and love. Nothing can change that. You should love that ferret even more now! You should keep a closer eye on your ferret, to monitor for any ADV symptoms. You can clean more often with bleach or parvocide to help kill the bacteria.

Most importantly, you should not let your ferrets interact with ferrets other than yours, if they have not been tested, or have tested negative. Do not let others handle your ferrets. If you handle others, change clothes and wash with an antibacterial agent. This is always a good way to prevent exposure to a variety of illnesses, not just ADV. You can do research & learn as much as you can about ADV. Keep your chin up! You are not alone!