

## Constipated Lizard

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*By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP*

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If you are comfortable with your local veterinarian, then you should call him/her and let them know that your leopard gecko still hasn't defecated. It may be necessary for your vet to give him an enema or to perform some diagnostic tests to ascertain why he has developed this problem.

Your herp vet can also give your gecko fluids under the skin to help improve its hydration, which also helps with some cases of constipation. Other medications may also be helpful in correcting this condition. However, it is also important to try to ascertain why your gecko developed constipation in the first place, in order to prevent this from happening again.

As I tell my readers all the time, if you have an inexperienced veterinarian or one not familiar with your species, you can suggest to them that they take advantage of the free consultation services offered by most of the large veterinary diagnostic labs. Veterinarians can call their lab and request a consultation with one of their staff veterinarians who are either board certified in certain specialties or who are very experienced in herp medicine, and can provide a wealth of information about diagnostics, treatments and procedures. Your herp vet should not be offended if you ask if it might be helpful to receive a consultation regarding your gecko.

It may be necessary to change the substrate that you use in the environment if that is involved in the impaction, or you might need to change the diet, as well. This can all be discussed with your herp veterinarian. But, first you either need to bring your gecko back in to see your vet, or you can ask your veterinarian for a referral to a larger referral center or to a vet with more herp experience. Your current veterinarian should not be offended or upset if you ask for a referral. So, you have several options on what to do about your constipated little gecko.

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### Need a Herp Vet?

If you are looking for a herp-knowledgeable veterinarian in your area, a good place to start is by checking the list of members on the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarian (ARAV) web site at [www.arav.com](http://www.arav.com). Look for DVMs who appear to maintain actual veterinary offices that you could contact.