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Goldfish Dropsy Symptoms

Goldfish dropsy is a not a medical term and it's not technically considered a disease.

The term refers to the combination of symptoms that 'dropsy' will display. The first sign of Dropsy is usually when you notice the fish 'pinecone' .

The symptoms of dropsy are the result of an internal bacteria infection in the kidneys.

The infected kidneys retain water, become swollen and throw of the homeostasis of the goldfish's osmoregulation.

Osmoregulation is the ability of a goldfish to keep its internal fluids in balance with the external water. In the late stages of dropsy, a goldfish will have a swollen belly so severe that its scales are raised outwards. (Pinecone).

A sick goldfish with dropsy may or may not have problems swimming but it typically becomes lethargic, has a loss of appetite and just looks unhappy.

The problem with curing a sick goldfish with dropsy is that most obvious symptoms are a sign of late stage dropsy. Most cases at this point are terminal and no goldfish care is likely to help.

Treatment

You can treat the tank with what I consider to be the best antibacterial medication available in the UK which is Waterlife Myxazin.

To help the fish further is to get a plastic tub to use for an Epsom salt dip. Make sure the salt is 100% natural magnesium sulphate with nothing else added. Use water from the tank the fish lives in to put in the tub and add 1 teaspoon of epsom salt per 10L of water. The Epsom salt dip will help draw out excess fluids in the goldfish. Leave the fish in the tub for 10 minutes then return to it's tank. Do this daily.

You can also raise the water temperature in the tank very gradually to 70–80 °F (21–27 °C). Always add extra oxygen as the increase in temperature will take oxygen out of the water.

A relatively high water temperature will also prevent bacteria from multiplying

Prevention

Most cases of dropsy are diagnosed too late and lead to the death of the goldfish; prevention of dropsy is the best option. Preform regular water changes and maintaining optimal water parameters. Keep the stress of the goldfish to a minimum by proper handling and proper aquarium setup. Do very regualr water testing with a proper liquid test kit never strips. The API freshwater master test kit is ideal.