

“Bloody” Nose or Eyes in Rats



Red staining around a rat’s nose or eyes is frequently mistaken for blood. A rat’s natural tear color is red and is called porphyrin, a product of the Harderian gland. A rat that is stressed or sick may produce too much porphyrin. Excessive amounts around the eyes and nose, or heavy staining on the front legs (from grooming) can be a sign of illness. Light colored rats will also frequently have red staining on their shoulders from grooming. See your veterinarian for treatment.

For more information, check out the AFRMA web site
www.afrma.org/rmindex.htm.