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**Statement on Avian Health & Safety**  
***Non-stick cookware and birds in the kitchen***

Over the last 15 years, I have seen thousands of pet birds for a variety of illnesses. In that time, only a few of the cases were of pet birds affected by non-stick cookware fumes, all of which were attributable to the negligent use of cookware. If it were common for birds to be affected by the proper use of non-stick cookware, avian veterinarians would hear about it and see the cases on a daily basis.

Any type of cookware, not just non-stick, can be dangerous to your pet birds if food is left to burn in pots and pans. Long before non-stick material presents a concern, fats, oils and butter will begin to smoke in a pan at 400-degrees Fahrenheit and can produce gases harmful to birds. This temperature is well below the point at which non-stick cookware could release fumes.

Bird owners need to take care to use cookware properly and in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations. A bird's health is endangered under negligent conditions, such as leaving an empty non-stick cookware pan unattended for several minutes at high temperatures in a poorly ventilated room.

In addition, bird owners should take precautions against the many other household hazards that probably pose a greater risk to pet birds than cooking properly with non-stick cookware. Contact with aerosol sprays, cleaning solvents, pots of boiling water, active ceiling fans, stained glass with lead, insecticides, glue traps, galvanized metals, open windows and mirrors, and certain plants and foods should be avoided.

Birds have unique respiratory systems and owners should take steps to protect birds living in the potentially dangerous environments of our modern homes. I advise bird owners to take the simple steps of cooking under normal conditions and keeping birds out of the kitchen to protect these precious family members.

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