

COMMON MEDICAL CONDITIONS

1.) GASTROINTESTINAL STASIS:

A potentially fatal situation where the gastrointestinal tract slows down, stops or is obstructed by a foreign object.

It is an emergency situation if your guinea pig has not eaten or defecated in the past 12-24 hours.

2.) SCURVY: Guinea pigs are the only animals other than primates that require vitamin C in their diets. Without enough vitamin C, they experience a break down in their connective tissues leading to joint pain, skin disease and gastrointestinal disease.

3.) UROLITHIASIS: Guinea pigs are prone to urinary stone development. If your guinea pig has not urinated in over 24 hours, it is an emergency.



PROPER HOUSING



Guinea pigs need room to move around and plenty of places to hide.

As a prey species, they are easily frightened by nature and need to feel secure by having a place to take refuge. It is also crucial to make sure that every pig has their own place to hide. Guinea pigs naturally develop a social hierarchy and not every hiding spot will be shared with every pig. Stay away from any wood shavings for bedding, the best choice is recycled newspaper beddings. Cages should be cleaned on a weekly basis.

For a complete list of works cited, ask a representative of Elmhurst Animal Care Center *

THE GUINEA PIG



How to care for these happy creatures as they munch, “chut chubble,” “squeel” and “popcorn” through life!

~Marina Jaworsky, DVM





THE DOMESTIC GUINEA PIG: PROPER DIET

The guinea pig or cavy, is a species of rodent originating from the Andes of South America. Domesticated in the 16th century due to their friendly and docile behavior, the domestic pig makes a wonderful pet. Their lifespan is 5-8 years. They are very vocal and each vocalization imitates a different emotion. A “wheek” shows an unhappy pig while a “chut-chubble” can mean bliss or excitement. There are 13 recognized breeds of domestic guinea pigs.

For a full list visit, <http://www.acbaonline.com/index.html>

Guinea pigs are social animals and are best kept in pairs or trios. It is wise to get some friends for your pet and expand your guinea pig family!

That being said, please be cautious when adding a new pig. Sometimes there can be inter-pig aggression.

If this is the case, it is best to separate the pigs. Aggressive behavior can be quite stressful and hazardous to their health.

Make sure to handle and exercise your pigs daily to adequately socialize and care for them. A piggy play pen is often the best way. Given enough room they will “popcorn,” which is a type of hopping into the air.

They only popcorn when they are extremely happy.

TIMOTHY HAY, ORCHARD GRASS, OR ALFALFA:

Hay is a vital part of your guinea pig’s diet and should be offered daily to your pig. You cannot give them too much hay. It helps to grind down their teeth, which constantly grow, and provides a vital amount of fiber for their gut. Alfalfa should only be offered to young pigs for growth. It is very high in fat and will lead to obesity problems in adult pigs.



FRESH GREENS AND FRUIT:

Fresh veggies are not an “optional” part of your cavy’s diet. A large bunch of vegetables should be offered daily and a small piece of fruit can be given every few days as a treat. For a complete list of items please visit:

http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/guinea_pigs/



PELLETS AND TREATS:

Offer a couple tablespoons of guinea pig pellets daily to your pig. Do not overfeed and make sure to get guinea pig pellets because they are the only ones fortified in vitamin C. Avoid diets that are colorful or full of nuts and seeds. Do not give sugary treats to your pig, such as yogurt chips or cereals.

