

## WILDSIDE VETERINARY HEALTH CENTER

### CARE SHEET: GUINEA PIG



#### Housing

- Guinea Pigs acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F.
- Cages should have a flat bottom (no wire) and should be large enough for the animal to run and hop in any direction. A minimum 36"L x 30"W x 18"H escape-proof, well-ventilated cage should be provided.
- There also should be plenty of room for exercise and play outside the cage.
- Always provide the largest habitat possible.
- Bedding should be unscented, dye-free. You may use paper based bedding or fleece. If using paper based, 1–2 inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat.
- A hideaway box should be provided to each guinea pig. Boxes can be made from hard plastic, wood, edible materials or cardboard..
- Bedding should be spot cleaned daily to remove soiled material and uneaten food, and the entire habitat and its contents should be cleaned thoroughly at least once a week (more often when there is more than one guinea pig in the habitat).

#### Food and water

- UNLIMITED Grass hay (timothy hay, orchard hay, oat hay, meadow hay). Offering hay is a must for guinea pigs, not only to help wear down their continuously growing teeth, but also to maintain proper digestive health.
- Plain hay based pellets - NO seeds, NO nuts or dried fruit should be mixed in. Give 1/4 cup of pellets per animal per day.
- Fresh produce like arugula, basil, beet greens, bok choy, cilantro, collards, endive, dill, green leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, radicchio, watercress. Give 1 cup of greens per animal daily.
- Do not offer sugary treats like yogurt drops.
- Fruits and carrots should be given in very limited amounts just as treats (for example: the guinea pig can have ½ a baby carrot or one strawberry a day).
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within 6 hours should be discarded.
- Since guinea pigs cannot make vitamin C in their bodies, vitamin C daily from high-quality pelleted food, vitamin C supplements and vegetables high in vitamin C (like bell peppers).
- Freshwater should always be available. Change it daily. You may use bottles or bowls - I always recommend having at least 2 in the cage.

#### Activity

- Cardboard boxes make great toys! You may fill it with hay to make it even more fun!
- Timothy hay based toys.
- Natural wood blocks to chew on.

#### Other information

- Guinea pigs stay clean and rarely need baths.

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- Their fur may be brushed with a soft brush; guinea pigs should be brushed once a week.
- Guinea pigs need their nails clipped approximately once a month.

**Veterinary care**

- Yearly wellness exam is recommended for young animals. After 3 years old they should be seen every 6 months.
- Dental care may be needed as their teeth grow continuously through life
- No vaccine is required.