



# All Creatures Animal Hospital

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## **Guinea Pigs As Pets**

**Average Lifespan: 4-8 years**

### **Diet**

- Guinea pig pellet food provides the best nutrient ratios for your pet.
- Grass hay should be available at all times.
- Fruits and vegetables can be given as supplements and treats.
- Vitamin C supplements should also be given, as guinea pigs cannot make this essential vitamin.

### **Grooming/Bathing**

- Oatmeal shampoo can be used weekly.
- Nails must be trimmed regularly.

### **Housing Recommendations**

- Use caging with a solid bottom so your pet does not get caught in metal grating.
- Places to hide must be provided for comfort.
- Paper, pine, or aspen bedding can be used (avoid cedar).
- Heat stroke can occur if your guinea pig is exposed to temperature above 85°F so outdoor housing is not recommended.

### **Annual Exam Recommendations**

- This time spent with our exotic veterinarian allows us to form a preventative plan for your pet. We can analyze your current husbandry and make suggestions.
- Fecal examinations check for internal parasites.
- Guinea pigs can contract external parasites so these must be checked for as well.
- Physical examinations by our veterinarian check for any physical abnormalities and dental disease.

### **Common Medical Conditions**

- Scurvy (vitamin C deficiency) is very common in guinea pigs. Signs include loss of appetite, swollen joints, lethargy, and poor bone and tooth development.
- Internal parasites can occur causing diarrhea and loss of appetite.
- External parasites such as lice, ringworm, and mites. Watch for hair loss and itching.
- Dental disease is common as teeth constantly grow. Watch for loss of appetite and increased drooling.
- Heat stroke can occur if kept in rooms above 85°F. Panting, lethargy and high body temperature are signs to watch for.