



All Creatures Animal Hospital

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Corn and Rat Snakes As Pets

Average Lifespan: 20 years

Average Length: 2.5-4 feet

Diet

- A rodent, such as a mouse, should be fed every week or two.
- The size fed should be about equal to the size of the thickest part of your snake.
- Thawed frozen or freshly killed prey is the best option for you pet snake.
- If your snake is not hungry, it will not kill and eat live prey offered, which can lead to harm for your snake.

Grooming/Bathing

- Snakes do shed so keeping a bowl of water for submerging and misting the enclosure aids in this process.

Housing Recommendations

- A 20-gallon screen top enclosure or larger will support your snake. Make sure that the lid has secure clips: corn snakes like to escape!
- A heat source must be provided either from a pad or lamp. Avoid using heat rocks as these can cause burns.
- The heating must provide a gradient with a basking side that stays approximately 95°F.
- Aspen shavings can be used as bedding. Avoid cedar bedding and artificial turf
- An area to hide under must be available.

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.
- Physical examinations by our veterinarian are needed to assess your snake's health and check for any mites.

Senior Screening

- Blood work may be recommended if sickness is suspected in your older snake.

Common Medical Conditions

- Internal parasites can occur causing loss of appetite, weight loss, and/or diarrhea.
- Mouth rot, a bacterial infection, can cause excess cottage-cheese like mucus, swelling and bleeding in the mouth along with decreased appetite.
- Respiratory infections can occur in snakes, causing nasal discharge and lethargy.
- With improper housing temperatures and humidity, snakes have difficulty shedding. This can result in retainment of the eye caps (the shed over the eyes) which can lead to blindness if not removed properly from a veterinarian.
- Septicemia, a severe infection in the blood, is an often fatal disease in snakes causing a red coloration on the scales, extreme lethargy, and appetite loss.