

## Feeding Your Guinea Pig

A guinea pig needs a varied diet that consists of :

1. A specific guinea pig food such as Alstoe Guinea Pig Nuggets
2. Fibre provided by hay
3. A source Vitamin C, make sure you find a good quality Guinea Pig diet that contains this
4. Green vegetables (avoiding lettuce).
5. Dandelions and grass.



We recommend Alstoe guinea pig nuggets as these contain everything your pet requires to remain healthy.

Hay needs to be available at all times for two reasons. Firstly to add extra fibre to aid digestion and secondly to help maintain their teeth. Because these teeth continually grow the chewing action when they are eating the hay grinds them down to a manageable length, without this constant grinding they may get overgrown and a trip to the vets may be needed.

The diet you choose for your guinea pig must contain vitamin C as they cannot produce their own and need extra supplies to keep them healthy.

Guinea pigs need feeding often as they tend to graze throughout the day and night so you must ensure fresh hay is available at all times and fresh greens and access to grass daily where possible. Fresh water should also be supplied daily, either in a bowl or a bottle.

## Housing Requirement

Guinea Pigs can be kept as an indoor or an outdoor pet. We recommend that during colder periods in the winter you bring them indoors e.g. In a shed, garage or in the house to prevent any harm occurring.

Outdoor hutches need to be raised from the ground and have a protective coating around them to shield against any bad weather.

The best bedding that can be used is wood shavings as it is absorbent. Hay or other safe, soft bedding should be put in a separate area to create a sleeping compartment. This should be separate from the hay used for food.

Having one feeding bowl per guinea pig and various hiding places can help prevent aggressive behaviour between fellow guinea pigs.



## Care and Company

Guinea pigs naturally prefer company so it is recommended that they have another same sex companion, however with males this can result in inter-male aggression. Never have two adult strangers housed together as they tend to be territorial and fight. We advise getting two at the same time possibly from the same litter, but do not house a brother and sister together as breeding of these can lead to genetic abnormalities

Males can be castrated if necessary but this will need to be discussed with your veterinary surgeon.



Guinea pigs do love to play! They like to be inquisitive and hunt for treats. We advise giving them a play area either outside e.g. a run or a pen with a box to hide in, or a space in a designated room where they are away from harm. They like to run through tunnels, play hiding games and hunt for food. They need to be kept active and happy with toys such as willow balls and guinea pig chew toys.

They enjoy being handled and this makes them the perfect children's pet! being stroked and groomed are often their favourite pastimes.



## Summary

Guinea pigs need to be kept clean and dry so remove soiled bedding on a daily basis.

They absolutely need to be kept active and thinking so hidden treats within their environment provides great mental stimulation for them.

They need to maintain a good balanced diet including vitamin c and to drink plenty of fresh water. They must be regularly socialised with people by being handled gently.

Enjoy your Guinea pig and if you have any questions at all do not hesitate to ask one of our practice nurses.

## GUNIEA PIG FACT FILE

**Male : Boar**

**Female : Sow**

**Young : Piglets**

**Life Span : 5 - 8 years**

**Gestation Period : 59 - 72 days**

**Litter size : 1 - 6 Piglets**

**Eyes open : At birth**

**Weaning Age : 3 weeks**

**Sexual maturity : 4 - 6 weeks**

**(Guinea Pigs have been known to breed at 4 weeks but it is unlikely)**



## GUINEA PIG CARE GUIDE



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