



Animal Ark Veterinary Hospital

336-835-1082

Vitamin C Requirements for Guinea Pigs

- ¼ Orange
- Cabbage
- Kale
- Vitamin C -50mg/cup water
- Celery-2 inches
- Dark leafy greens
- Bell peppers-1 slice
- Broccoli (stem, floret)
- Cauliflower
- Strawberries, Mango, Kiwi
1 cubic inch-1-2 times/week

Avoid high sugar fruits

Caring for your **Pet Guinea Pig**

Did you know that Guinea Pigs are the only domestic rodent with no tail? While Guinea Pigs are fun pets to have, taking care of them is also a big job! Find out what supplies you will need and what responsibilities you will have to take care of your new best friend.

Supplies Needed

- A cage made of hard plastic, at least 16 square feet per pig. Avoid glass and wood cages.
- Line cage with at least three inches of bedding, shredded paper. Pigs love to burrow!
- Guinea pig pellets
- A hide box
- 250 mg chewable Vitamin C tablets for humans
- A water bottle that attaches to the cage. These are cleaner than water bowls.
- Chew toys like wood blocks or lava rocks, Guinea pigs' teeth never stop growing. They need to chew daily.
- Timothy hay only. Never use alfalfa or wood chips (especially cedar!), as these cause serious health problems.

Making Sure Pigs Get Vitamin C

Guinea pigs don't make their own Vitamin C, so you must feed them Vitamin C found in rich green and orange vegetables. Unfortunately, they don't always eat all of their vegetables. A quick way to make sure they get enough vitamin C is to place a 250 mg chewable Vitamin C capsule in their water bottle (about 8 ounces of water) each day. They love the orange taste! Water should be replaced daily.



Dangerous Foods

Never let your pet eat:

- Chocolate
- Salty food
- Salt
- Alfalfa hay
- Nicotine
- Cedar chips
- House plants



Chores

Daily

- Change water and replace Vitamin C tablet
- Feed 1/8th of a cup of guinea pig food only per pig of all ages. They do like to overeat!
- Provide unlimited timothy hay
- Provide fresh green and orange vegetables
- Clean up leftovers before they spoil
- Take your pig out and play with him/her no more than 20 minutes

Weekly

- Feed your pig fruit 2-3 times a week. If you give them too much fruit, they will stop eating other foods and get fat.
- Clean the cage and litter box using bleach. Mix one part bleach to 10 parts water. Rinse thoroughly.
- Brush long haired guinea pigs 2-3 times a week. You don't need to groom short-haired guinea pigs.

Yearly

- Take your guinea pig to your veterinarian at least once a year.
- Periodically, the veterinarian will need to trim the Guinea Pigs teeth.

The Right Temperature

Make sure guinea pigs never get too hot or too cold. It's best to keep them between 70 and 80 degrees F, and never over 80 degrees F.

How to Hold Your Guinea Pig

Be careful when picking up your pig. When you remove your pet from his/her cage, make sure you support the back.

Neuter or Spay Your Guinea Pig

To prevent health problems, females should be spayed and males should be neutered when they are at least four months old.

More Than One Guinea Pig?

Guinea pigs prefer living in groups of two. But they don't do well in large groups. Avoid putting two males together, because they will fight.

Don't Let a Loose Guinea Pig Out of Your Sight

When you take your pet out, never leave him/her alone. Guinea pigs will chew dangerous wires or escape.

Finding the Right Veterinarian

- A veterinarian that treats "exotic pets" will be more comfortable with guinea pigs
- When you get your pet, have your parent or guardian take it to a veterinarian for a check-up
- Your pet should see a veterinarian at least once a year and when you think it might be sick

Information on caring for your pet guinea pig provided by Monique Weldon, DVM of the Coal Creek Veterinary Hospital in Centennial, Colo.

