

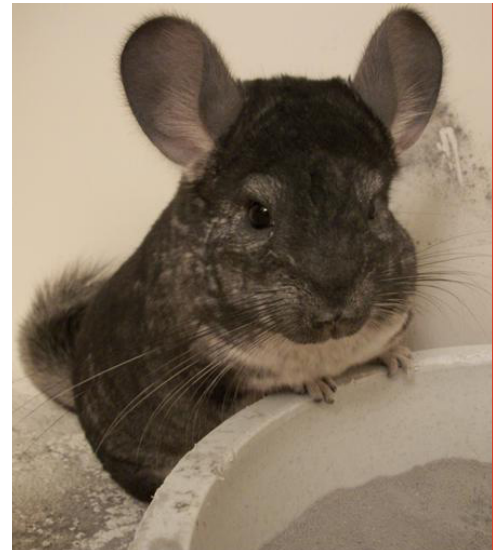
Chinchilla Health

Chinchillas do occasionally get sick, and their illnesses can often be severe. Your new chinchilla should be examined by a qualified veterinarian within two days of adoption and annually thereafter. The first veterinary exam is critical to detect signs of disease. Chinchillas do not require any vaccines.

Monitoring Health

It is important to monitor your chinchilla's health daily. If you learn what is normal for your chinchilla, you will be able to quickly identify when something is wrong. Some things to look out for are:

- Abnormal feces
- Labored breathing
- Anorexia
- Lethargy
- Matted fur
- Fur loss
- Lumps or bumps anywhere on the body
- Excessive sneezing and or coughing



If any of these symptoms are observed in your chinchilla, contact a veterinarian. Any deviation of your chinchilla's behavior from normal should be cause for concern and looked at by your veterinarian immediately.



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Common Chinchilla Diseases

Dental Issues: Chinchillas teeth grow 2–3 inches per year. The upper and lower teeth must align properly in order to wear down against each other. Malocclusion occurs when the teeth do not meet properly and therefore do not wear correctly, leading to overgrowth. This can happen with the front teeth and back molars. These overgrown teeth may develop sharp edges that may cut the tongue, cheek, or lips, leading to difficulty eating, decreased appetite, weight loss, drooling, eye problems, and pawing at the face. Chinchillas may also develop deep tooth root infections or abscesses.



Heat Stroke: Chinchillas are very susceptible to heat stroke. Their ideal temperature ranges from 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures over 80 degrees can quickly cause heat stroke. High humidity should also be avoided, as chinchillas do not tolerate humid conditions and can easily die from overheating.



Skin Problems: Chinchillas are susceptible to numerous skin and fur problems such as fungal infections, fur chewing, hair loss, and an unusual problem in which the fur becomes wrapped around the penis in a 'ring' leading to irritation or constriction of the penis. If your chinchilla develops any of these issues, seek help from a veterinarian.

Respiratory Diseases: A relatively minor respiratory problem that is left untreated can rapidly progress to pneumonia, which can be fatal. Conditions such as overcrowding, poor ventilation, and high humidity may predispose to pneumonia.



Gastrointestinal Stasis (GI): Refers to a slowing down of the passage of food through the gastrointestinal tract when chinchillas stop eating. Once the animal stops eating, the normal population of bacteria that inhabit the gastrointestinal tract, breaking down food changes and often toxin and gas producing bacteria overgrow, making the animal even more uncomfortable. GI stasis is a potentially life threatening condition that must be treated by a veterinarian as soon as possible.