

Caring for your

# Guinea Pig



## life span

5-7 years

## diet

### **Pelleted Food and Hay**

- Guinea pig pellets with vitamin C daily (1/8 cup)
- HAY SHOULD BE AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES
  - Alfalfa for younger or pregnant pigs
  - Timothy hay or orchard grass for adult pigs
  - Discard if damp or does not smell fresh

### **Fresh Food**

- A good source of additional vitamin C
- Slowly introduce
- Leafy foods such as romain lettuce (not iceberg)
- Carrots, carrot tops, green and red bell peppers, apple, apricots, bananas, blueberries, cantaloupe, oranges, and strawberries can also be fed in limited amounts

*Never feed rabbit food or avacado!*

## housing

- Minimum size for one guinea pig: 7.5 square feet (30 in x 36 in cage)
- The larger the better
- Solid flooring (not wire)
- Bedding: newspaper, carefresh bedding (do not use cedar or sawdust)
- Provide ample hiding places for your pig(s) like a plastic or wooden igloo
- Guinea pigs are social animals and like to be kept in pairs

## treats & toys

- Treats are not recommended—provide nutritious fresh foods instead!
- Make sure there are plenty of chew toys for your pig. Guinea pig teeth grow continuously and need to be worn down.

## restraint

Most pet guinea pigs are calm, gentle animals that rarely bite. To pick up a guinea pig, cup one hand gently under the thorax (mid-section) and use the other hand to support the hind end.

## healthcare

### Spay/Neuter

Fixing your pig is only beneficial if you wish to house a male and female together without the chance of producing offspring.

### Toenail Clipping

- Guinea pigs need their toenails clipped on a regular basis (1x/month)
- Be careful not to cut the quick of the toenail (it's good to have Quickstop on hand)

### Veterinary Care

- Yearly examinations
- Signs your pig needs to see the vet:
  - Bloated abdomen
  - Constipation or diarrhea
  - Discharge from the eyes or nose
  - Dull look in the eyes
  - Labored breathing
  - Lethargy
  - Loss of appetite
  - Unexplained weight loss



## fact

When happy or excited, guinea pigs will hop or bounce up and down. This is called “popcorning”.