



Is My Guinea Pig OK?

Guinea pigs hide illness. A guinea pig who LOOKS ill is often already very ill — so check them every single day.



Lives 5–7 years



Always keep two



Unlimited hay



Vitamin C every day



This looks healthy

What a well guinea pig looks like day to day.

- ✓ Busy and chatty — moving, squeaking and eating for much of the day
- ✓ Bright, alert eyes; clean nose and ears
- ✓ Coat shiny and well groomed, with no bald patches
- ✓ Front teeth not overgrown, and level with each other
- ✓ Chin and neck dry (wet fur there means dental trouble)
- ✓ Droppings small, well formed and tear-drop shaped
- ✓ Breathing quiet — no wheezing, clicking or gurgling
- ✓ Walks without limping; feet pink, with no sores



Tell a grown-up — call the vet

Any of these means an exotic or small-animal vet should take a look.

- ! Eating less than usual
- ! Quieter than normal, or hiding more
- ! Wet, matted fur on the chin ('slobbers')
- ! Dropping food, or refusing the harder foods
- ! Weight lost or gained over a short time
- ! Bald patches, or swollen joints
- ! Runny eyes or nose, or sneezing

Check them every day for signs of illness or injury — and get someone else to check if you're away.



Go now — this is an emergency

- ◆ Not eating, or drinking much less
- ◆ Any trouble breathing
- ◆ Fewer droppings than usual — or none at all
- ◆ Drooling and off their food

If eating or drinking changes, or the droppings slow down or stop, call the vet immediately — they could be seriously ill.



Before you call: write this down for the vet

What did you notice?

When did it start?

Eating normally?

Drinking normally?

Poop and pee normal?

Anything else different?



Put your vet's number here before you need it

Our vet

Phone

Emergency vet

Phone



If your pet has eaten something they shouldn't have, a grown-up can call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center on (888) 426-4435, any hour of any day. A consultation fee may apply.