

## Bunny Facts:

- ◆Life span: 6 years is average, but some will live 9 years or more.
- ◆Gestation: 29-35 days.
- ◆A rabbits teeth never stop growing
- ◆Rabbits need hay to assist the digestive system and prevent fur balls in their stomach
- ◆Rabbits can see behind them, but have blind spot in front of their face
- ◆They may have red urine depending on their diet
- ◆Many common medications and antibiotics are poisonous to rabbits
- ◆Rabbits require no vaccinations, but yearly wellness exams are recommended.

## Common Problems:

- ◆Rabbits can develop intestinal problems frequently. Any rabbit with poor appetite should be examined right away.
- ◆Wire caging and poor hygiene can lead to sore feet.
- ◆Respiratory problems are not uncommon
- ◆Dental disease is often seen, their teeth should be examined regularly as a preventative measure.
- ◆Common skin problems include bacterial abscesses, fur and ear mites, fungal infections and fleas.



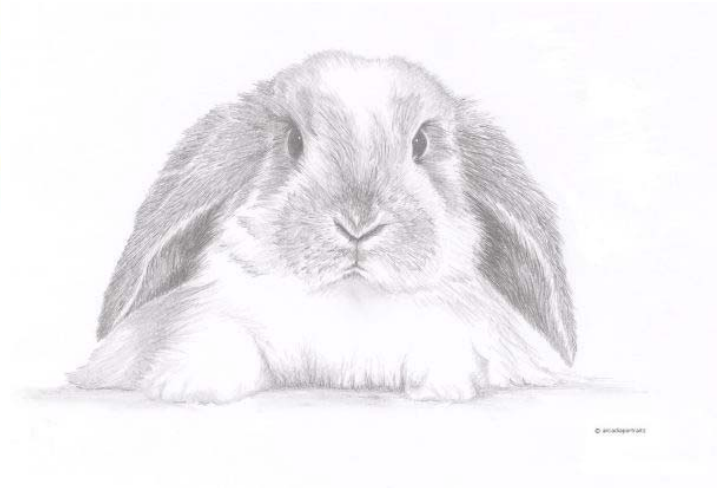
### Animal and Avian Medical Center

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Animal and Avian

## Rabbit Care and Husbandry



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## Nutrition:

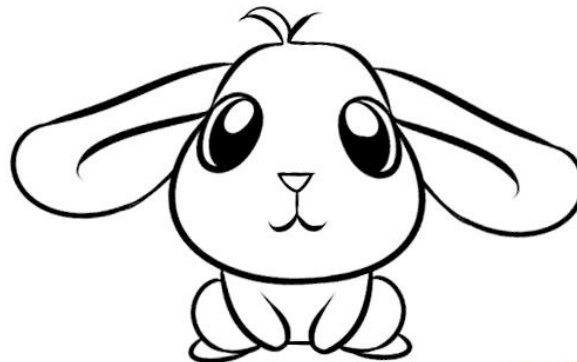
Rabbits should have constant access to TIMOTHY HAY and 1/8 to 1/4 cup of pellets. Poor nutrition can cause complex diseases in rabbits. Timothy hay is the most important component of the diet and is a great source of fiber.

Due to their inability to vomit, rabbits can get hairballs or slowed digestion (stasis) which can be life threatening. High amounts of fiber are necessary to challenge the digestive system and prevent gastric or GI stasis. Timothy pellets are preferred for rabbits that won't eat much hay.

Fresh high fiber greens should also be added to the diet. Dark green such as endive, kale, mustard greens, romaine, parsley, collard greens, dandelion and carrot tops, are some of the best to offer. Spinach and iceberg should be avoided as they may cause problems. Carrots, oats and other treats should be avoided or given in small amounts occasionally. Crackers, cereal, corn, oats, bread and sugary fruits (especially grapes and bananas) should be avoided entirely.

## Housing:

Most commercial cages are fine for rabbits, but purchase one that can be cleaned easily. Homemade cages should be free from stains and paint so that the rabbit does not ingest possible toxins, If you are using a wire bottom cage, include plexiglass or wood areas so that the rabbit doesn't develop "sore hocks". Rabbits often chew things that can be harmful to them so they should not be left to roam the house unmonitored. For bedding, processed newspaper or shredded cardboard is ideal. Carefresh is an excellent choice, it is soft and dust free. Avoid using clumping litter and any shavings or wood chips as they can cause respiratory, skin and liver damage. Rabbits can be litter trained easily by hanging a hay rack or basket over their litter box. Pelleted newspaper and dust free non-clumping litter is best to use in the litter box.



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## Stools:

Rabbits produce two types of stool. The day stools are firm, night stools are usually soft and not formed. It is normal for rabbits to eat the night stool.

## Spaying/Neutering:

Male rabbits can spray urine in the home, neutering usually decreases this occurrence. Many female rabbits can get serious ovarian and uterine problems that can be prevented by spaying. We recommend spaying or neutering at four months or older.

## Grooming:

Combing and brushing your rabbit daily will help to reduce hairballs. This is also a good way of checking for fleas and other parasites. Rabbits can be bathed if needed, but use kitten safe shampoo, rinse very well and keep free from drafts while the rabbit is drying. Due to their light skeleton and long back, it is important to never over restrain a rabbit.