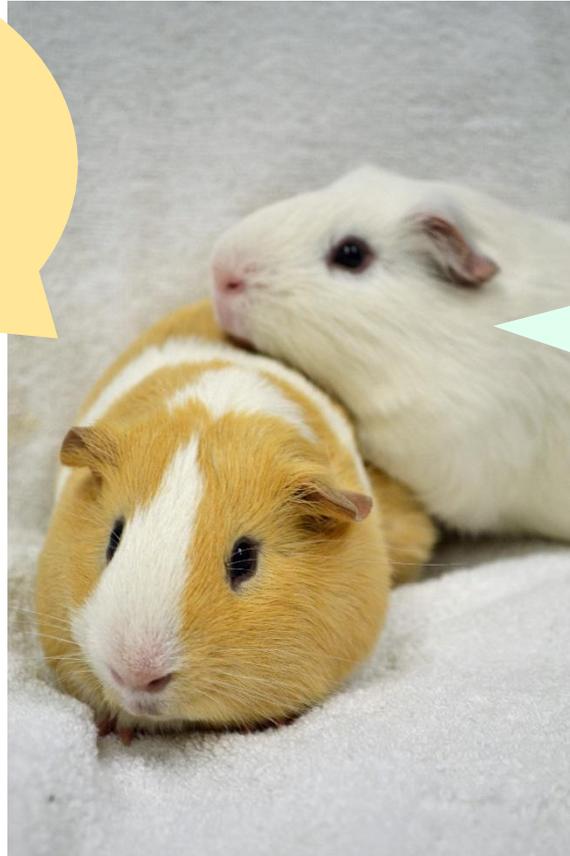


# Guinea Pig Care

**We need lots of grass hay, a variety of vegetables, and limited guinea pig pellets to stay happy and healthy!**



**Don't forget a spacious cage and a companion too!**

Wee Companions Small Animal Adoption, Inc.

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[www.weecompanions.org](http://www.weecompanions.org)

## **Wee Companions' Philosophy**

Our mission is to rescue guinea pigs, rats, hamsters, and other small exotic mammals from shelters, places of abandonment, and from persons relinquishing their pets. Whenever possible, we offer a safehouse to these animals, irrespective of age, temperament, or health status. These animals will receive veterinary care and socialization in the hopes that they will be placed in a "forever" home. Animals given Sanctuary Status will be placed in our foster care network to live out their lives in comfort and with love. We are also focused on educating foster parents, school children and others on the prevention of unwanted litters as well as the care and feeding of these animals.

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## Basic Guinea Pig Facts

1. Guinea pigs are strict herbivores; their diet consists mainly of unlimited amounts of grass hay, small amounts of guinea pig pellets, and a variety of fresh greens and vegetables.
2. Guinea pigs require a surprisingly large amount of space. A single guinea pig will be healthiest and happiest in a cage that is at least 7.5 square feet. Each additional guinea pig living in the cage will require an extra 2.5 square feet.
3. Guinea pigs are very social animals and greatly benefit from the companionship of other guinea pigs. Two same-sex guinea pigs must be introduced on neutral territory and carefully observed for bonding.
4. On average guinea pigs can live between five to eight years, but their longevity can be increased with proper feeding and spacious housing. Guinea pigs may be small animals, but they are not a “small” commitment or “starter pet.”
5. Considered to be exotic animals, guinea pigs’ medical care can be very costly. An average veterinary examination costs \$50 to \$70, not including any further diagnostics, treatment, or surgeries needed. Treatment of ill guinea pigs can easily cost hundreds of dollars.
6. Guinea pigs are crepuscular, which means that they are most active in the mornings and evenings. During the day, they alternate between periods of activity and sleeping.
7. Female guinea pigs are called “sows;” male guinea pigs are called “boars.”
8. Extra large guinea pigs, also known as cuys (pronounced coo-ees), have been marketed in the United States as standard guinea pigs. In actuality, this type of guinea pig does not make a good pet. Cuys are strong and very challenging to tame and grow to be twice the size of a standard guinea pig.
9. Personality varies from guinea pig to guinea pig; there is no real correlation between gender or age and certain personality traits.
10. Guinea pigs should never be placed in a rolling exercise ball or encouraged to use an exercise wheel. Their backs are simply not designed for these toys.

## Housing Your Guinea Pig

There are many ways to house your guinea pigs. From commercially-sold cages to handmade C&C cages, size and safety are top priorities. A stimulating and spacious environment for your guinea pigs is vital to their good health; protection against other pets must also be taken into account. Whether built by hand or store-bought, the above considerations are the same.

### Size

Your guinea pigs should be offered the largest area possible. The more space you can provide, the happier and healthier your guinea pigs will be. It is recommended to provide at least 7.5 square feet per guinea pig and to add 2 square feet per additional guinea pig, but a pair of male guinea pigs or pairs of guinea pigs who are not closely bonded may need a bit more space. If you choose to construct or purchase a cage with multiple levels, the ground level first needs to meet these square footage requirements. Additional levels do not add to overall “run space.”

## Temperature

Guinea pigs are very susceptible to heat stroke when temperatures rise above 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Ideally, the room in which the guinea pig cage is located should be between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit. When air conditioning is not available, there are a variety of ways to keep your guinea pigs cool: you can place a frozen plastic water bottle in the cage, drape a wet towel across the cage and oscillate a fan over it, provide fresh vegetables or fruits with high water content (such as cucumber, watermelon, or lettuce) to ensure that the guinea pigs stay hydrated, and refill water bottles with fresh water frequently.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency for guinea pigs and great care should be taken in its prevention.

## Safety

All cages must have a smooth and flat bottom to prevent injuries to feet and toes. Wire grates should not be used at any time. A high-sided (6 inches is recommended) cage bottom keeps bedding contained inside.

With no other animals in the house or if the cage is located on a table above the reach of other pets, cages can be open-topped. Open-topped cages allow for much more interaction without awkward cage doors and wire bars getting in the way. If you have pets with a high prey drive and if you believe they may pose a threat to your guinea pigs, an enclosed cage is necessary. Even if your cage is securely closed, other pets should always be supervised closely in the presence of small animals.

Aquariums and plastic tubs are not suitable as housing because they do not provide a spacious living environment with proper ventilation.

For the ambitious or extremely devoted, consider free-range housing for your guinea pigs. To have a free-range animal requires vigilant safety standards. If you decide to house your guinea pigs free-range, choose a room without rocking chairs, heavy furniture under which a guinea pig can become stuck, exposed electrical wires, or busy areas with children or other pets. Doors must be kept secured. Even if your guinea pig is housed free-range, he needs his own space to retreat and rest, eat, and drink. Free-range housing can be a challenge to keep clean as urine and feces are farther spread out in a larger area. Make sure you have the time to devote to maintaining a clean free-range area. Litter boxes or “puppy pads” placed where your guinea pigs spend most of their time may help alleviate some of the extensive cleaning required with a free-range environment.

## Location

No matter which type of housing you choose, a central location in the home is preferred. If the cage is located in the “hub” of daily life, the guinea pig will receive more attention and will be a part of the family. Remember that there should always be an adult as the main caretaker to ensure that the guinea pig is being cared for.

The cage should be kept in a draft-free area and out of direct sunlight. Dark corners, basements, garages, and closets are not recommended because these areas are uncomfortable or unsafe for guinea pigs and are

typically not high-traffic areas of the home. It is not recommended that guinea pigs be housed in a child's bedroom because parental supervision is not available at all times. Above all, choose a location where the guinea pig will receive the most attention from the entire family.

## **C&C Cages**

One type of cage that meets proper size recommendations for guinea pig cages are C&C cages. A C&C (cubes and coroplast) cage is a simple and affordable option for providing a large space for your guinea pigs. These cages are made using 14" x 14" coated-wire storage cubes, plastic connectors and/or zip ties, and corrugated plastic (coroplast). These cages can be customized easily to your tastes and size requirements and provide much more space for play and exercise while requiring less frequent cleaning. A top can be made for a C&C cage by purchasing 16" wide white-coated wire organizational shelving designed to be used in closets, found at most home improvement and hardware stores.

Coroplast is typically sold in 8'x4' sheets at sign shops and plastics distributors for between \$10 and \$30, but due to their size the sheets are most easily transported in a large vehicle. Packs of wire grids and plastic connectors can be found at many stores at varying prices, typically for \$15 to \$20. All grids should have nine squares across to ensure the guinea pigs do not get their heads stuck.

Visit [www.guineapigcages.com](http://www.guineapigcages.com) for detailed instructions for creating your own C&C cage, as well as information, tips, and inspiration photos.

## **Store-Bought Cages**

Most store-bought cages are not adequate in size for even a single guinea pig and aren't recommended for long-term guinea pig housing. A guinea pig should never be kept permanently in a cage smaller than 4 square feet.

If you must use an inadequately sized store-bought cage as the main cage, your guinea pig will need extra exercise time daily in a secure room or pen. To cope with a small cage, at least 1-2 hours of exercise daily will be necessary to ensure your guinea pig maintains good health. A safe exercise area must be free of other pets, escape routes, items that can be chewed or destroyed (including electrical wires, wood, and paper), and young children. Some guinea pig owners use a bathroom or dog exercise pen. Be sure to put down towels or blankets to absorb any urine.

In addition, it is recommended to limit cage accessories that may take up precious space in a small store-bought cage. Hiding houses and other accessories should be kept to a minimum in order to maximize space in the cage. Consider making a hiding area by covering one end of the cage with a towel or blanket and placing the food bowl, hay, and water bottle at the other end to encourage movement between areas.

You may be able to find some larger commercial cages, such as Marchioro (Tommy 120) cages, Midwest Guinea Pig Habitats, and pet exercise pens (or "X-pens"), that can provide adequate space. These will be more expensive than C&C cages and certainly other store-bought cages, but the increased size and safety

against other pets may make a commercial cage worth consideration. Ultimately, aim to purchase the largest cage possible.

### **Cage Accommodations**

Fresh grass hay should be available at all times. Hay racks are an option for supplying nutritious hay and to keep it clean and off the ground, but you may wish instead to provide hay in a litter box with some disposable bedding underneath. Some guinea pigs tend to defecate and urinate where they eat; using a litter box to supply the hay will help keep the mess contained to a smaller area. Be sure to remove soiled hay daily, spot-clean wet and dirty bedding often, and do a complete change of the bedding at least once per week.

Water bottles are more hygienic than bowls, which will become contaminated quickly and are difficult for a guinea pig to use. Have at least one bottle for your guinea pig and increase the number of bottles for larger groups. Change water daily; clean the bottle and spout weekly with hot water, soap, and a bottle brush each week. The spout can be cleaned with Q-tips or a trumpet brush.

Pellets must be supplied in a heavy ceramic bowl that cannot be tipped over. The bowl should be washed with hot water and soap once per week.

Ramps and upper levels can be added to C&C cages and offer unique additional space for guinea pigs. Precautions must be taken to prevent falls from ramps and upper levels. Consideration should be given to the amount of space a ramp will take up in the cage as well as to how the upper level will affect your ease of cleaning.

### **Outside Options**

Housing a guinea pig outside is never the optimal choice and presents several serious risks to your pet's safety and health. Any animal that is housed outside is never a full member of the family. The pet will go many hours without being tended to and is more likely to be forgotten about or ignored. Lighting is poor at night which may further dissuade caretakers from checking on the pets in the evening.

Since they are low on the food chain, guinea pigs hide illness well. A few minutes to replenish food each morning may not be enough time to realize that your guinea is not eating normally or acting like its usual self.

Life outside leaves your pet more susceptible to weather extremes and, most importantly, predators. Although outside pens may offer larger living areas than inside, a hungry and determined predator can get through weak door locks and dig under fences. Temporary exercise pens also must be covered to protect the guinea pigs from birds of prey and direct sunlight.

Warm climates can be deceptive; days can start cool but by lunchtime can reach high temperatures (over 80 degrees) while the family is away from the home. Such extremes can lead to heat exhaustion, seizures, and death.

Giving your guinea pig time outdoors to exercise can be an exciting and stimulating experience for them. However, they must be in a secure, contained area, protected from any predators on the ground as well as those in the sky, and be supervised by a vigilant caretaker at all times. If the exercise pen is located on a grass lawn, the grass must be untreated and clean, and any plants nearby must be ensured to be safe for guinea pig consumption. Dandelion and clover are two forages approved for guinea pigs to munch on. Be aware that a guinea pig that is not accustomed to eating fresh grass may experience bloating, stomach aches, or soft feces, so they must be gradually introduced to it.

## **Bedding**

There are a variety of options for bedding, both disposable and reusable. Disposable bedding options include wood shavings such as aspen or kiln-dried pine and recycled paper pelleted bedding.

Frequency of cleaning depends on the size of the living area, your personal sensitivity to any smell, and allergies. Generally, feces, soiled bedding, and wet hay should be removed daily and all the bedding changed at least once per week.

Cedar shavings are toxic to small animals and should never be used. If using wood beddings, we recommend hardwoods such as aspen or kiln-dried pine or recycled paper products. Corncob can be prone to mold so should be avoided.

### **Fleece Bedding**

Some like to use fleece bedding instead of disposable options. Fleece bedding is easy to set up, relatively odorless, and affordable. A layer of fleece wicks urine to absorbent layers underneath, while keeping feces and other debris on top. With diligent daily removal of feces and uneaten food and weekly changes, fleece bedding will work properly and remain dry on the surface, which prevents associated health problems like pododermatitis (commonly called “bumblefoot”) and urinary tract infections. Guinea pigs love this type of bedding as it provides a comfortable environment, stays cool in warm weather, and is cozy in the winter months.

To install fleece bedding, place two layers of bath towels, UHaul furniture pads, or mattress pads (nearly any absorbent material that is 100% cotton), underneath a piece of prepared anti-pill or blizzard fleece cut to fit the size of your cage bottom. The fleece must be prepared before use by washing and drying it 3-5 times on hot settings to break the fabric’s waterproof barrier and enable wicking. Additionally, fleece should never be washed with fabric softener or dryer sheets, which inhibit wicking. Fleece bedding **must** be spot cleaned daily with a broom and dustpan or handheld vacuum to remove feces, stray hay, and scattered bedding. All bedding must be fully washed with detergent in a washing machine and dried in a

dryer at least once a week. Vinegar OR bleach may be used when washing to disinfect the bedding, but they should never be used together, as they create a harmful gas product.

## **Cage Cleaning**

Soiled hay, wet disposable bedding, and feces should be removed daily or every other day, and a full clean including disinfecting the cage base must be done at least once weekly. Disinfecting can be done with diluted bleach or white vinegar.

## **Guinea Pig Diet**

### **Hay**

A guinea pig's diet should consist mainly of unlimited grass hay (timothy, orchard or bluegrass). Hay is essential to keep the teeth ground down to a proper length and to keep the digestive tract moving well. The best hay is soft, green, fresh-smelling, and free of mold or sharp stalks, which can cause eye and mouth injuries. Typically, orchard grass hay is a favorite among guinea pigs and is better for people who have allergies to grasses. Alfalfa hay can be supplemented to guinea pigs under 6 months of age or guinea pigs who are pregnant or nursing. Alfalfa hay is too rich in calcium to be a main part of an adult guinea pig's diet and can lead to bladder stones.

Hay can be provided in a hay rack, on top of an inch of disposable bedding in a small cat litter box, or through a combination of the two. All hay should be stored in a dry, cool place out of direct sunlight.

When storage space is available, hay can be purchased by the bale at feed stores and hay farms for a very reasonable price. High-quality bluegrass hay and Timothy hay can be purchased online at KMS Hayloft ([kmshayloft.com](http://kmshayloft.com)). Oxbow brand Western Timothy hay and Orchard Grass hay are available for purchase online at PetFoodDirect ([petfooddirect.com](http://petfooddirect.com)) and Doctors Foster & Smith ([drsfostersmith.com](http://drsfostersmith.com)).

### **Pellets**

A high-quality plain pellet without extra treats, seeds, or colorful bits should be fed once per day. Most adult guinea pigs require only 1/8-1/4 cup pellets each day; guinea pigs under 6 months can be given unlimited amounts. Some older guinea pigs, especially those over 4 years old, require a larger amount of pellets each day to maintain a healthy weight. Timothy hay-based pellets are designed for guinea pigs over 6 months of age; alfalfa hay-based pellets are for young guinea pigs and pregnant or nursing sows.

The pellets should be formulated with Vitamin C and bought in small quantities to ensure freshness. If you purchase in bulk, pellets that will not be used within a few months should be frozen to preserve the Vitamin C content. Pellets should be stored in a dry, cool place out of direct sunlight.

Avoid or limit pellets that contain beet pulp, soy products, corn products, rice or bran flour, or vegetable fiber. These are fillers and provide little nutrition. Avoid foods that contain sweeteners, corn syrup, sucrose, molasses or artificial colorings or preservatives.

Recommended brands include Oxbow and KMS Hayloft ([kmsheyloft.com](http://kmsheyloft.com)).

Pellets are best served in a heavy ceramic bowl.

## **Water**

Fresh water should be available at all times. Do not provide water that is distilled or high in minerals such as calcium. The water should be changed daily.

Plastic or glass drip bottles are best for supplying water for hygiene reasons; however, the bottles and the spouts need to be cleaned at least weekly.

## **Vitamin C**

Guinea pigs need approximately 25 mg of Vitamin C daily. It is not recommended to provide Vitamin C drops in the water bottle. Vitamin C deteriorates in water; in some cases it can dissuade the guinea pig from drinking because it affects the taste of the water. Daily fresh vegetables including bell pepper and cilantro are the best way to provide sufficient amounts of Vitamin C. However, some veterinarians may recommend adding a Vitamin C supplement. Unless your guinea pig is ill or elderly, a supplement is an optional addition to the diet. If you choose to add a supplement to your guinea pig's diet, ensure that it is a human grade, plain liquid supplement. Liquid Vitamin C can be syringed into the mouth. As an alternative to a liquid supplement, part of a plain chewable Vitamin C tablet--such as the one made by Oxbow brand--can be given orally. Mineral or salt licks and Vitamin C supplements found in pet stores are very poor quality and can be detrimental to your guinea pig's health.

## **Vegetables**

A variety of fresh greens and Vitamin C-rich vegetables is recommended daily. They must be washed prior to being fed, and any unconsumed veggies must be removed from the cage. It is recommended that each guinea pig receive 1 cup of vegetables each day; this can be broken up into two servings. A general formula for daily vegetable feedings is to offer two servings of leafy greens, one serving of a non-leafy vegetable, and an 1/8 of a bell pepper.

Some examples of vegetables that can be fed daily include cilantro, endive, escarole, red leaf lettuce, green leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, butterhead lettuce, radicchio, zucchini, baby carrots, tomatoes, and bell pepper (all colors). To ensure proper daily Vitamin C intake, an 1/8 of a bell pepper should be fed to each guinea pig.

Darker greens tend to have higher levels of calcium and Vitamin A. When fed daily, high consumption of dark leafy greens can cause urine sludge or the development of bladder stones. Foods such as kale,

parsley, and dandelion should not be fed more frequently than every other day and in moderate amounts. Gassy vegetables including broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage can cause a buildup of gas inside a guinea pig's abdomen and can lead to a very painful condition called bloat, which requires immediate veterinary care.

Please consult the vegetable chart included in your adoption folder or located in the "Resources" section of the Wee Companions website to ensure your guinea pig is receiving a balanced variety of vegetables as part of a healthy diet.

Forbidden foods include animal or dairy products, meats, rabbit pellets, chocolate, dried fruit, avocado, potatoes, onions, raw beans, nuts, and seeds. Iceberg lettuce contains no nutritional benefits and can cause soft feces.

## **Treats**

Commercially-made treats typically are fattening and offer few nutritional benefits. The best treats for guinea pigs are small amounts of fruit on a weekly or twice weekly basis. Safe fruits to feed infrequently as treats include apples, blackberries, blueberries, cherries, raw cranberries, grapes, kiwi, mango, melon, oranges, papaya, peaches, pears, pineapple, plums, raspberries, strawberries, or watermelon.

## **Coprophagia**

As an important part of good nutrition, guinea pigs engage in a behavior called coprophagia, meaning they consume some of their droppings. These softer and smaller pellets are called caecal faeces ("cecal pellets") and contain many important nutrients. You may witness your guinea pig wait in a crouched position before suddenly reaching down to take the pellet directly from the anus. This is a normal behavior and occurs at any time of day or night.

## **Toys and Accessories**

### **Hiding Houses**

As prey animals, guinea pigs feel most secure when they have a cozy hiding area to which they can retreat. Some options include plastic "igloos," cardboard boxes, or wooden houses. Wooden houses can also serve as chew toys but are not as easily sterilized as plastic. Houses made of willow wood or grass will quickly be devoured.

Cardboard boxes turned upside down or shoeboxes with doorway and window cutouts can be an amusing toy for guinea pigs. Soda boxes or oatmeal tubes can be used as tunnels.

Many small businesses sell handmade fabric guinea pig beds, hammocks, sleeping bags, tunnels, hiding houses, and other cage accessories in online shops.

## **Chew Toys**

Unlimited grass hay is the most effective “chew toy” you can offer your guinea pig. Wooden sticks from apple or pear trees that are dry and untreated can offer an additional chew toy but may be ignored by some guinea pigs. Cardboard rolls or brown paper bags stuffed with hay can provide an interesting toy. These chew toys also may only benefit the front incisors and do not reach the molars that are farther inside the mouth.

## **Other Toys**

Plastic, dried grass, or willow toy balls are other toy options for your guinea pig to push around and throw. Toys with bells are often enjoyed by guinea pigs as well. Some guinea pigs become attached to small stuffed toys and enjoy pushing them around as well as snuggling with them.

Fleece “forests” can be made by tying strips of fleece to the cage top. The strips dangle down and provide an exciting hiding area to explore and run through.

# **Health and Grooming**

## **Weight**

It is relatively rare to find a truly obese guinea pig unless the guinea pig is kept in a small cage that encourages little to no movement and is fed unlimited amounts of high-sugar or high-fat foods. With a well-rounded diet and a spacious cage, most guinea pigs maintain a healthy weight. The average weight of a guinea pig is 2.5-3.5 lbs (approximately 1100-1600 grams). However, each guinea pig has a different “normal” weight due to varying bone structures between guinea pigs, so the only way to ensure your guinea pig is at a healthy weight is to provide a balanced diet as well as an environment conducive to exercise and activity. Contact a veterinarian experienced with exotic animals to help determine a healthy weight for your guinea pig.

Guinea pigs, as prey animals, tend to hide symptoms of illness. Regular weighings on a kitchen scale (in grams) can alert you to an abnormal drop in weight, which may be a sign of some underlying health issue such as malocclusion. If a guinea pig loses three or more ounces (approximately 70 or more grams), an appointment with an exotics veterinarian should be arranged.

## **Wellness Exams**

On a regular basis, it is a good idea to examine your guinea pig for ill health. Feel all around the body for lumps or patches of hair loss, and observe your guinea pig for excessive scratching. Check that the eyes are clear and bright, with no drainage. (A white, milky fluid is normal; guinea pigs produce it to wash their faces.) Abnormally frequent sneezing and drainage around the nose can indicate an infection. Ears should be free of debris and should not be odorous. The pads of the feet should be clean and soft.

## **Nail Clipping**

Guinea pigs need their nails clipped monthly to ensure that they are at a proper length. Nails that are left to grow too long will curl painfully and can even grow into the pad of the foot. Using a human nail clipper or small animal nail clipper and avoiding the pink blood vessel (“quick”), cut the clear tips of the nails. If your guinea pig has dark nails, a light shone from underneath can outline the blood vessel in the nail. If the quick is accidentally cut and begins to bleed, don’t panic. A cut blood vessel is painful for the guinea pig but can be resolved quickly. Simply touch styptic powder or a styptic pencil onto the cut to stop the bleeding. In a pinch, flour or cornstarch can sometimes be used but are not recommended and must be washed off after use.

## **Hair Trims**

Long-haired guinea pigs such as Peruvians and Silkies may need regular hair trims to keep hair clean. Long hair that drags through urine and feces can grow bacteria and lead to urinary tract infections. Using a pair of scissors, simply cut the hair straight across at the desired length to keep the hair from dragging in the back.

## **Bathing**

Some pet owners bathe their guinea pigs regularly to ensure cleanliness, but guinea pigs usually sufficiently clean themselves. If your guinea pig’s hair is soiled or odorous, you can bathe your guinea pig with lukewarm water and a bit of small animal shampoo. Keep water out of the ears and face. Thoroughly rinse out the shampoo. A guinea pig should be completely dried before being returned to the cage. After rubbing out as much moisture as possible with a towel, a hair dryer on cool settings can be used to further dry the guinea pig.

## **Caudal Gland (“Grease Gland”)**

All guinea pigs have a caudal gland (commonly called a “grease gland”) on their rumps at the base of the spine, located on the back an inch or less above the genitals (where you would imagine a tail to be). It is a trait intended for scenting and marking in males, but like nipples both sexes can have grease glands. The gland secretes oil and can feel waxy to the touch. Left uncleaned, it can become infected. Some guinea pigs accumulate excess buildup of oils on the grease gland. Frequency of cleaning required will vary between individual animals.

You can trim the hair around the gland for an easier view. Extra-virgin, cold-pressed coconut oil has proven to be successful in cleaning grease glands. Rub a teaspoon or so into the gland and allow to sit for about ten minutes before using lukewarm water and small animal shampoo to clean the area. Thoroughly rinse out the shampoo.

## **Impaction**

Older guinea pigs or those confined to very small cages can develop impaction when the muscles of the anus are weakened or stretched and unable to push out feces. A condition called impaction results as fecal and cecal pellets are trapped inside the perineal sac. Impaction can lead to ill health, as the buildup of feces affects proper digestion and the guinea pig is unable to eat the cecal pellets (which are essential to good diet). Impaction can be cleared with extra-virgin, cold-pressed coconut oil and Q-tips. Push a bit of coconut oil into the anus and gently use the Q-tips to loosen and remove buildup.

## Emergency Evacuation

In the event of a wildfire or other natural disaster, it is a good idea to have extra basic supplies on hand for quick and efficient evacuation. It is especially important to have a hard-sided pet carrier for your guinea pigs in disasters as they can function as a safe and sturdy temporary cage as well. Your name and phone number should be located on the carrier to ensure that you are not separated from your animals in a crowded shelter or other situation.

An adequate disaster kit would include enough hay and pellets to last at least four days; one water bottle for each guinea pig; a food dish that attaches to the door of the carrier or temporary cage; enough fresh water to last four days; a plain chewable Vitamin C tablet; and exercise pens and bath towels to allow for exercise once you reach your evacuation site.

## Online Resources

- [www.guinealynx.com](http://www.guinealynx.com)  
A comprehensive source for all information on guinea pigs, from general care and feeding to medical care and health. There is also a forum full of knowledgeable members who are willing to answer further questions.
- [www.guineapigcages.com](http://www.guineapigcages.com)  
Directions for building your own C&C Cage using storage cubes and corrugated plastic.
- [www.tlpmarketplace.com](http://www.tlpmarketplace.com)  
A variety of guinea pig supplies, including food, accessories, and grooming tools.
- [www.guineapigcages.com/forum](http://www.guineapigcages.com/forum)  
This forum is affiliated with the C&C Cages website and allows guinea pig owners to post questions and receive answers from the many experienced members.
- [www.calicavcollective.com](http://www.calicavcollective.com)  
A very informative guinea pig blog that further details many aspects of guinea pig care.