



## Keeping Your Rabbit Healthy

An annual exam by a rabbit veterinarian is very important. By feeding unlimited grass hay and a proper diet, grooming regularly, and providing a safe, secure habitat with an exercise area, a rabbit parent can practice preventive health care. Monitor your rabbit daily and become familiar with his habits, attitude, appetite, energy level and behavior.

### ■ Changes that warrant an immediate visit to your rabbit veterinarian

Not eating for more than twelve hours  
Not drinking, urinating and/or defecating  
Listlessness  
Loss of balance  
Distended abdomen  
Loud tooth grinding  
Hunched posture

Preventive health care includes performing a home health check every month. Using the guidelines listed below you can help your rabbit live a long and happy life.

### ■ Mouth, Teeth, and Jaws

Gums should be a healthy pink color.  
Be aware of drooling, lumps along or under the jaws, or oral odor.  
Verify that the teeth are growing straight and are not overgrown.  
Your rabbit vet should check the front and back teeth during the annual medical exam.

### ■ Nose

Check for discharge and check each foreleg for evidence of nose wiping.

### ■ Ears

Look inside for dark debris, wax or flakiness.  
Check for abnormal odor.

### ■ Eyes

Be aware of any discharge, changes in tear production or clouding of the cornea.

### ■ Fur and Skin

Feel the body all over for unusual lumps or scabs.  
Check for fleas, flea dirt, dry flaky skin or hair loss (bald spots during the shedding season should not cause alarm).  
Do not use over the counter flea treatments or Frontline, which is toxic to rabbits. Please contact your rabbit veterinarian for safe flea control for your rabbit.

### ■ Feet, Toes, and Nails

Trim nails cautiously being careful not to cut into the quick, which may result in bleeding. It is important to have styptic powder available to stop any bleeding.  
Note any sores or abscesses on the bottom of the feet or toes.

### ■ Feces and Urine

Note any changes in the appearance or amount of feces and urine; a healthy rabbit produces large moist pellets. Small irregular feces or liquid feces require medical attention.  
Cecotropes (soft brown droppings shaped like a miniature bunch of grapes) are normal and are usually ingested.  
Rabbit urine varies in color and is sometimes red. Your veterinarian can determine if this color change is due to blood or to plant pigments in the diet.

## ■ Anal Area

---

Wet, dirty fur and skin can attract flies, even indoors. If fly eggs or maggots are seen, consider it an emergency and go immediately to your rabbit veterinarian.

## ■ Spaying and Neutering

---

We highly recommend that you have your rabbit spayed or neutered.

Eliminates uterine or testicular cancer.

Prevents pregnancy.

Reduces odor.

Will help modify undesirable behaviors, such as urine spraying, mounting and aggression.

Please see our website at [www.adoptarabbit.org](http://www.adoptarabbit.org) for local veterinary listings.