

Time to Bring Your Guinea Pig Home

By: M.D. Andrews

Have you researched, studied, and prepared? If so, then your guinea pig will adapt and adjust to you very quickly, and you and your new cavy will get off to a great start! It's time to bring your guinea pig home!

Your Cavy's First Veterinary Check-Up

Sometime when young guinea pigs are brought into pet stores by the breeders they often experience an enormous amount of stress. As you may already know, changes in the environment and surroundings are difficult to handle for most guinea pigs. This stress can affect their immune systems and make them susceptible to things like upper respiratory infections, which are contagious. Consequently you want to make sure that your pet has not been infected by any of its cage-mates, and is off to a good start health-wise.

Your new pet should be examined by a vet within the first couple of days after you purchased him. If you haven't already, now is the time to locate a good veterinarian that specializes in small animals. Be sure to ask your vet lots of questions during your pet's initial exam; it's better to have health questions answered ahead of time rather than in an emergency situation.

Home Sweet Cavy Cage

In planning and preparing to bring your new pet cavy home for the first time you should have already purchased or built a cage (or hutch) for your new pet. Remember that a cavy needs adequate cage space to be healthy and happy. He needs plenty of room to run around and get his exercise. In fact, introducing them initially to a smaller cage will make them feel very anxious as they have hardly any means of hiding.

So be sure that you have everything ready for him before you bring him home so that you can pop him into his new home as soon as you arrive. Also make sure that you have provided a hideaway-house in their cage so that they can retreat there if they get scared. It's very important to provide this hiding place right from the beginning. If you don't provide this, they can get very stressed.

Although you will be mightily tempted to pick up your new cavy friend right away you should allow him at least the first 24 hours to get used to his new environment. You must remember that your new pet is in a new home and a new environment, and he is probably somewhat scared right now. If you pick him up and cuddle him it's just going to make him even more scared and stressed.

Make sure your pet's cage is out of direct sunlight and cold drafts. The cage should be kept in a well-ventilated space and placed in a room where you spend much of your time. Remember that cavies love company, and if you isolate them away from people or other activities they will quickly get very lonely which will very quickly have a negative impact on their health.

Stress, sickness, and early death can be totally prevented by setting up your cavy's cage the right way and giving them the proper diet and attention from the very beginning!

Have a Cavy-Safe House

Before you bring your guinea pig home you need to make sure that you have made your home safe for your new pet. Cavies need "floor time" and a safe place to roam. For this reason you should create a pet-safe room where there is nothing dangerous for them to chew on or otherwise injure themselves. Make certain they can not get to any dangerous plants or chew on electrical cords. Be sure to remove any rodent traps or poison from the room or from any cabinets in the room (cavies love to explore!). Rodent poisons are deadly for cavies, just as they are for mice and other vermin. Also be sure that there are not any household cleaners or chemicals about that they can get into and ingest.

Bonding with Your Guinea Pig

Don't attempt to pick up and hold your new pet until you feel that he has become comfortable with his new cage and new surroundings. If he is comfortable he will be actively investigating his new cage and not hiding in his hiding place. Now you need to get him accustomed to you, and you need to do this very slowly and methodically, and gain his trust.

The best way to get your pet to trust you is, without a doubt, bribery. This is accomplished by giving your cavy special treats like carrots or cucumbers. Gently open the cage door and place the treats just inside the door. Then close the door and patiently wait for the cavy to accept the treat. You may have to try this a few times, but eventually he will connect you and the treats.

Once this "connection" has been made, and the trust has been established, you can now attempt to pick up your cavy. The best way to pick up your pet is by using two hands; with one hand you will gently place it under his chest, and with the other place it underneath his rear end. Be sure not to squeeze too tightly - be gentle. Then pull your pet in to your chest or place him on your lap so he feels safe and doesn't thrash around. Avoid putting him down on a tabletop or anywhere else where he could fall. Talk to him with a soothing voice, pet him gently, and give him a treat.

You and your cavy will soon be best of friends, and your pet will actually look forward to these cuddling sessions. They're very easily spoiled!

Summary

Preparation is key before you bring your guinea pig home for the first time. Before buying your new pet guinea pig it's important to learn a little about what you'll need to take care of them. Your new pet guinea pig is entirely dependent

upon you for it's health and well-being. Make sure that your guinea pig's new home is waiting for him or her, and that it is safe and comfortable. Have you researched, studied, and prepared? If so, then your guinea pig will adapt and adjust to you very quickly, and you and your new cavy will get off to a great start! It's time to bring your guinea pig home!

About The Author:

For more information on "bringing your guinea pig home for the first time" please visit Mike's web page at <http://www.petguineapigsinfo.com/bringing-guinea-pig-home> and his guinea pig website at <http://www.PetGuineaPigsInfo.com>. Peace.

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