



info@aeacarizona.com

Address:
1911 South Lindsay Road
Mesa, AZ 85204

Phone: (480)706-8478
Fax: (480)393-3915
After Hours **Emergency Paging System**
(pages answered every night until 10 pm!)

Rabbit Care and Diet

Lifespan: 7-10 years

Diet:

Grass or timothy hay: free choice (90% of diet) (alfalfa is not preferred)

Green leafy vegetables: a loose pile the size of the rabbit's head

Large, unlimited amounts of fresh hay should be offered daily. Young bunnies should be introduced to hay as soon as they can eat on their own. Mixed grass hay or Timothy hay is preferred because it is lower in calories and calcium than alfalfa.

Use a good quality, high fiber alfalfa or timothy based pellet as a small part of your rabbit's diet.

Feed a minimum of 1 cup vegetables for each 4 lbs. of body weight. Select at least three types of vegetables daily. A variety is necessary in order to obtain the necessary nutrients, with one each day that contains Vitamin A, indicated by an *. Add one vegetable to the diet at a time. Eliminate if it causes soft stools or diarrhea.

Limit fruits to 1-2 tablespoons per 5 lbs. of body weight (none if dieting) from the list below of high fiber fruits. Sugary fruits such as bananas and grapes should be used only sparingly, as occasional treats. Bunnies have a sweet tooth and if left to their own devices will devour sugary foods to the exclusion of healthful ones.

Vegetables:

Alfalfa, radish & clover sprouts

Basil

Beet greens (tops)*

Bok choy

Broccoli (mostly leaves/stems)*

Brussels sprouts

Carrot & carrot tops*

Celery

Cilantro

Clover

Collard greens*

Dandelion greens and flowers (no pesticides)*

Endive*

Escarole

Green peppers

Lettuce: Romaine, Red or Green leaf (no iceberg or light colored leaf)*

Mint

Mustard greens*

Parsley (!X)*

Pea pods (the flat edible kind)*

Peppermint leaves

Radicchio

Radish tops

Raspberry leaves

Spinach (!#)*

Watercress*

Wheat grass

(!)=Use sparingly or rotate. High in either oxalates (X) or goitrogens (#) and may be toxic in accumulated quantities over a period of time

Fruits:

Apple
Blueberries
Melon
Orange (including peel)
Papaya
Peach
Pear
Pineapple
Plums
Raspberries
Strawberries

Absolutely NO chocolate (poisonous!), cookies, crackers, breakfast cereals, bread, pasta, yogurt drops or other "human treats." There is research to suggest these items may contribute to fatal cases of enterotoxemia, a toxic overgrowth of "bad" bacteria in the intestinal tract.

Housing:

24" x 24" x 18"- high for small breeds

36" x 36" x 36"- high for larger breeds

A solid floored area is needed. Solid walled cages should be avoided.

Any bedding used in the cage should be non-aromatic. Pine and cedar shavings can be extremely irritating to the respiratory tract. A recycled paper bedding, such as Carefresh, is recommended to use as bedding or in the litter box.

Temperature: 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit, keep humidity low

Litter training: Start with a small area and place your litter box in a corner (it's best to pick a corner where the rabbit has already used). Reward your pet when it uses the box and never punish him when he is in the litter box.

Schedule of Care:

Annual physical examination

Spaying/neutering at 3-6 months of age

Nail trims as needed if unable to trim at home

Common Medical Problems:

Cancer in female rabbits: prevent by spaying your rabbit at a young age

Aggressiveness and urine spraying: prevent by neutering your rabbit at a young age

Overgrown teeth due to malalignment: trim teeth every 3-8 weeks if malaligned

Diarrhea: true diarrhea is uncommon but soft stools are common. Intermittent soft stools are normal, with the soft stool occurring at night and hard stools occurring during the day. Rabbits may eat these stools, which is normal behavior. Sudden diet changes or a low fiber diet may cause persistent soft stools. Introduce new food slowly and follow the diet recommendations listed above.

Pasteurellosis: Pasteurella multocida commonly inhabits rabbits' sinuses. When stressed, this bacteria can overgrow and cause infection throughout the body. With any signs of illness, have your rabbit examined. Signs commonly seen are runny nose, loss of appetite, decreased activity, abnormal head posture, skin lesions.

References: House Rabbit Society www.rabbit.org