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## Sugar Glider Care

### Stats:

The sugar glider is a marsupial species native to New Guinea and Australia.  
Lifespan is 12-15 years.  
Nocturnal and live in colonies of 6-10 with one dominant male.  
Males mark territory with scent glands.  
Females have a pouch in which to raise their young.  
Males weigh between 100-160 grams, females between 80-130 grams.  
These agile climbers can use their patagium (gliding membrane) to glide up to 50m.

### Housing:

The bigger the better. Minimum cage size is 36"X24"X36" with PVC coated wire. Wire spacing should not exceed 1.0"X0.5".  
Temperature range needs to be 75-80.  
Provide multiple food and water dishes high up in cage.  
Hang multiple fleece pouches high in cage.  
Place branches, wheels (no open rungs), and shelves throughout cage for exercise and play. Do not use wood shavings.

### Diet:

Feed a pelleted sugar glider insectivore diet and Gliderade (a vitamin-enriched nectar supplement).  
Gliders require vitamin D3 in their diet.  
Supplement several times a week with gut-loaded insects, such as crickets and grasshoppers.  
Supplement calcium to growing, pregnant, and lactating sugar gliders.  
Fruits and vegetables should not comprise more than 5% of the diet. Too much of these items leads to obesity and metabolic disease.

### Socialization:

Sugar gliders are highly social creatures that require being housed in groups of 2 or more.  
Optimal time to socialize with humans is 8-12 weeks out of the pouch.  
Spend at least 2 hours a day interacting with your glider.  
Gliders are very vocal. They will be heard crabbing when frightened, barking when lonely or playful, purring when content, and may sneeze or hiss while grooming.

### Common Medical Problems:

Malnutrition and Obesity - Prevent with proper diet and exercise.  
Nutritional Osteodystrophy - Prevent with diet containing vitamin D3 and calcium.  
Gingivitis and Tartar - Prevent with regular feeding of insects (the exoskeleton helps remove tartar).  
Self-Mutilation and Hair Loss - Prevent by providing proper socialization, housing in groups of 2 or more, and having a large enclosure with plenty of opportunities for play.  
Eye Injuries - Monitor for squinting or discharge from eyes.  
Neutering of males is recommended to decrease aggression and self-mutilation.  
Annual physical exams with fecal checks are recommended.