



Small Paw Prints

Premium Education for the Pet Owner

Volume 1 • Edition 6

Head to Paw Care

Teaching you to take care of your pet from head to paw

We understand that you want to give your pet the best possible care. Nutritious food, exercise, veterinary care, clean water and a clean environment are just a few of the essential things you provide for them.

You need products you can trust and guidance you can rely on. Oxbow specializes in nutrition and, over the years, we've been blessed to have been mentored by veterinarians, pet organizations and pet owners. Those experiences compel us to share our knowledge with others in order to promote the best possible head to paw care.

Common Health Problems

• Gastrointestinal (G.I.) Stasis

G.I. Stasis is when your pet's digestive tract starts to slow down and may even stop. Indications of G.I. Stasis may include inappetence and changes in the amount and appearance of fecals. G.I. Stasis can be caused by a few different things: Lack of hay in the diet, not drinking enough water, stress, or some other underlying health issues. The best prevention of G.I. stasis is proper nutrition.

• Dental Issues

Dental issues are a very preventable condition. Indications of dental issues may include inappetence and weight loss. The best prevention is feeding an adequate amount of hay. Your herbivore's teeth are continuously growing. Chewing on hay helps to naturally wear down their teeth.

• Obesity

A fat pet is not a healthy pet! Herbivores need to have a controlled diet of healthy foods in correct proportions. Animals that receive too many treats and sweets do not eat what is good for them and can become overweight. Your herbivore only has to have hay, water, and pellets. Everything else is just extra. When animals become overweight, they can have many health problems, as well as trouble moving around. If you choose to give your pet a treat, make it a healthy one (low in sugar and simple carbs), such as Oxbow's Simple Rewards.

Remember to always consult your veterinarian with any questions or concerns.

What can I do for my pet's dental health?

Dental disease is common in small herbivores. Feeding a high roughage diet that requires a lot of chewing will help keep teeth worn down. Grass hay should be available at all times.

Be familiar with your pet's teeth and behaviors. Report any changes in tooth shape, color or texture to your veterinarian.

Your small herbivore should have its teeth checked at each veterinary visit, and a full examination of its teeth at least once each year.

Early detection is the most important key to managing dental disease. The earlier you know about the problem, the more likely it can be helped.

Ask the Doc

Q: I just got a rabbit. What can I expect on my first visit to my veterinarian? And what should I bring, if anything, to help that visit?

A: Your veterinarian is going to want as much information as possible, including any paperwork and medical history as well as current diet and husbandry specifics. This information will help your veterinarian to determine the current and future needs of your rabbit. Your veterinarian will do a complete physical exam on your new rabbit to look for common problems such as dental disease or obesity. This initial portion of the exam will help determine if any additional diagnostics, such as a fecal exam and blood work, or treatment, like teeth trimming, are necessary.

Be prepared to ask questions and communicate with your veterinarian. Express any concerns you may have. Early detection is the most important key to managing your animal's health. Most health issues start small. With effective veterinarian/owner communication, your animal can receive the best care possible.

Micah Kohles, DVM knows you have important questions about your pet's health. For more answers to customer-submitted questions regarding pet health, or to ask a question of your own, visit the Vet Speak section at www.oxbowanimalhealth.com.



WHY IS VITAMIN C IN THERE?

Make an informed decision when choosing your pet's food by understanding the purpose of each ingredient.

Vitamin C: L-Ascorbyl-2-Polyphosphate

Cavies, like humans, cannot manufacture their own vitamin C and it is not stored in their body. Therefore, all of their vitamin C must come from the foods they eat daily. Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin needed for making skin collagen and blood protein, as well as aiding general metabolism. It is a valuable antioxidant with wound healing power and an ability to fight fever and infection.

Cavies receiving inadequate vitamin C in their diet are less able to handle physical and psychological stress. They are more prone to infection and diseases such as scurvy. Scurvy is a vitamin C deficiency which can be characterized by rough hair coat, anorexia, diarrhea, teeth grinding, delayed wound healing and/or lameness.

Oxbow's Cavy Performance for young, growing, lactating and gestating guinea pigs and Cavy Cuisine for the adult guinea pig both contain a stabilized form of vitamin C called Stay-C, which helps ensure a longer shelf life.

Western Timothy Hay

Looking for a good, basic grass hay with high quality nutrition, and a fresh fragrance that's irresistible to small herbivores? Oxbow Western Timothy Hay is the ideal long-strand fiber source for keeping small animal digestive tracts functioning properly.

Our most popular grass hay, Western Timothy contains high fiber, low protein, and low calcium content and is widely recommended by veterinarians. Oxbow Animal Health was the first pet food company to introduce timothy hay as a staple in the small animal diet. It is now an industry standard.

Unique Qualities:

- A Dietary Staple
- High-Fiber Hay

Kids' Corner!

Keeping good records for your pet is very important.

Records allow you, as a pet owner, to keep track of and identify changes with your pet. Feeding changes and veterinary visits are some of the most important events to document in your small pet's life.

Visit www.oxbowanimalhealth.com for printable record keeping pages.



Small Paw Prints was created because Oxbow Animal Health is committed to sharing its experience about small animal nutrition with pet owners throughout the world. Enjoy this and other editions of Oxbow's Small Paw Prints at a pet store or veterinary clinic near you. Collect them all at:

www.oxbowanimalhealth.com



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