



## Highgate Veterinary Clinic Pet Information Sheet

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### Tips for Looking After Your Rabbit

During National Pet Month 2009 (April 4th - May 4th)  
Highgate Veterinary Clinic are offering  
**FREE Rabbit Health Checks.**  
Call 01597 721344 to make an appointment.  
Medicines and procedures required will be charged as usual.



"Chu's Ashton", a tortoise coloured English Angora buck.  
Photo Courtesy Betty Chu

Rabbits make brilliant pets: Quiet, clean and entertaining, but like all pets should be properly checked daily and have access to a large exercise area.

#### The main keys to good rabbit health are;

- Feed a correct high fibre diet this will help prevent dental problems and many other ailments.
- Keep your rabbit clean.
  - Clean their home properly at least twice weekly.
  - Check twice daily for signs of matted droppings and maggots around his rear end, especially in warm months.
- Vaccinate your rabbit annually to offer protection against myxomatosis and viral hemorrhagic disease (VHD)
- Neuter your rabbit to prevent aggression, unwanted breeding, and uterine cancer.
- Ask our advice about preventative treatment for viruses, control of parasites and protection against fly strike.
- Have regular check-ups with your vet for early identification and treatment of potential problems.

#### Did you know...?

- Rabbits are adapted to hide signs of suffering. As they are prey animals they don't like to draw attention to themselves so it won't always be obvious if something is wrong.
  - Keep an eye on them and take them to a vet if you think they have a problem.
- Rabbits need as much exercise as a small dog.
  - Their enclosures should have enough room to allow them to do at least 3 consecutive hops, and sit up straight on the hind legs.
  - An adapted shed is ideal.
- Rabbits can be house-trained and make great house pets.
  - Pet rabbits need plenty of exercise and company like their wild cousins and indoor rabbits get far more of this than rabbits kept exclusively outdoors.
- Rabbits' teeth never stop growing, so they need to grind them down as they eat.
  - A diet of 80%-90% hay is essential, with only a small quantity of pellet food and vegetables.
  - Provide clean water in a large, drip-feed bottle.
- Rabbits are forgetful, and can forget their companions after a few hours.
  - Take them to the vets together and never separate same-sex companions.

#### RSPCA

The RSPCA website contains lots of information and advice if you are considering keeping a rabbit as a pet.  
<http://tinyurl.com/RSPCA-rabbits>