**Bunny Care**

**Please Read**

**The last Page has special information regarding Velveteens**

The rabbit you have purchased is a newly weaned baby. Please make sure the baby is drinking water and eating regularly. DO NOT CHANGE THE BABY’S FEED OR INTRODUCE FRUITS OR VEGETABLES UNTIL 12 WEEKS. These rabbits are dwarf breeds and are very fragile. Failure to follow instructions may result in your baby’s death. The bunny will need lots of attention from you to keep it tame and friendly. Hold the bunny close to you against your chest. It will be fearful until it gets to know you better. Grabbing it from the back suddenly will make it think you are a hawk and it will flail about to get away. If they become afraid when holding them and start to kick or struggle, gently cover the babies eyes with one hand and cup him with the other hand and speak low and softly until he calms. Covering his eyes and holding him close will make him feel safe like he is in his nest. With young children it is best to put the bunny in a basket or box to allow them to pet and play with the rabbit. Bunnies will die if dropped. They are notorious for “popping” out of your hands.

 If you plan to keep the bunny outside please provide a large hutch with a run. Put wire underneath so they cannot dig out. The rabbit is a prey animal to EVERYTHING. Snakes, raccoons, cats, dogs, hawks, and even rats. Do not leave the rabbit in an uncovered pen outdoors. A hawk will find it. The rabbit will need to be indoors in temperatures over 85 degrees. It will die from heatstroke.

If the rabbit is going to be living indoors make sure they have a cage that is large enough for a rabbit. Give them a small house inside of the main hutch that they can get inside of if they get too cold or afraid. The bunny can be litter trained so it can be free to roam your home if you wish. Litter training comes naturally to a rabbit. Litter training cannot be expected of a rabbit under 12 weeks old.

Line the bottom the bunny’s cage with Equine Pelletized bedding, carefresh or aspen shavings. If the cage is all wire, they will need a footrest to keep sores from developing on the feet. They need toys to play with and things to chew on to keep their teeth worn down to the appropriate level. Trim their nails and groom your baby with a brush regularly.

A rabbit’s diet should mainly consist of hay and pellets.  Fresh timothy hay should be provided to rabbits at all times. Small pet select is a good source for fresh hay.

The bunny also needs a bowl of timothy pellets in its hutch. I feed my adult rabbits one half cup of pellets once a day. Baby bunnies should be free fed pellets and hay. Baby bunnies need to be kept on their weaning diet. This baby is eating Manna Pro Rabbit Feed. It can be purchased at tractor supply. Do not change the babies food until 12 weeks or the baby could die. When changing food type for any age rabbit mix existing food half and half with new food for a week or more to keep the bunny from having digestive problems.

Do not give your rabbit veggies until 16 weeks of age. Don’t give fruit. Limit veggies to a small amount about once a month only

Your rabbit may enjoy some of the following vegetables:

* Basil
* Bok choy
* Broccoli leaves (stems or tops can make rabbits gassy)
* Carrot tops (carrots are high in calcium and should be given sparingly)
* Celery
* Cilantro
* Clover
* Collard greens
* Dandelion leaves
* Dill
* Kale (sparingly)
* Lettuce – romaine or dark leaf (NO iceburg lettuce and no cabbage)
* Mint
* Mustard greens
* Parsley
* Water cress

Fresh water must always be available to your rabbit. Newly weaned babies usually only know how to drink water from a bowl. You can gradually teach them to drink from a hanging water bottle. However, give them both options to make sure they are getting enough water while learning to use the bottle. The hanging water bottles should be checked twice a day. They stop up or malfunction often. Don’t use them when it is warm outside. Use a crock to keep the water cooler.

99 percent of your bunnies diet should be hay and timothy pellets. You can give treats in moderation. Bunny treats can be bought at the pet store. Fruit can cause illness in the bunny.

Rabbits are prey animals, and so their natural instinct is to hide any symptoms of illness. You must keep a watchful eye to ensure your rabbit is eating, drinking, pooping, and peeing regularly. If you notice any change in behavior, it is important to call an exotic vet immediately. Dr. Tim Tristian is an excellent exotic vet. He is currently with the Animal Clinic of Padre Island near compass street. He can also be reached at the Texas Sea Life Center. There is also an exotic vet at Windsor Park Animal Hospital. In an emergency take the rabbit to the emergency vet clinic near Lowes on Airline. They will see you bunny. Act fast if your rabbit is not eating, drinking, or has loose stools. You can contact me anytime if you bunny gets fleas, fur mites or ear mites. These are usually simple parasites that can be treated by medicines available over the counter a tractor supply. Please consider spaying or neutering your rabbit. Spaying/neutering can reduce aggressive behavior, improve litter box habits, keep the rabbit from spraying and excessive chewing, and improve a rabbit’s overall health. Rabbits are easily frightened because they are at the bottom of the food chain. A rabbit can have a heart attack from fear. Don’t chase the rabbit or allow it to be around loud noises or animals it has not been slowly introduced to over time.

Do not try to mix two rabbits together that have not been raised together since infancy. The rabbits will fight and can kill each other. Rabbits are solitary animals and can be very territorial. If the rabbits are litter mates or have been together since before 8 weeks of age they will likely pair bond and not have any problems getting along as long as they are spayed/neutered. Rabbits do not get lonely for other rabbits. They live alone in the wild.

Remember, if you keep your rabbit locked in a small space, don’t give it attention or love, or don’t spay or neuter your rabbit it will become aggressive from unhappiness. Investing time and attention will give you a wonderful sweet companion.

Your bunny is a big commitment. Dwarf rabbits can live 14 to 15 years. The average Dwarf will live about 7. The life span is longer if kept indoors. I hope you enjoy your new pet. You are always welcome to text me for advice or information. I put a lot of love and work into my babies and I care what happens to your new bunny. Don’t hesitate to text me

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Helpful Products and Links:

Bunnrabbit.com for low cost bunny supplies

Amazon for rabbit cages and hutches



Special Information for Velveteens

Velveteens tend to be more “babyish” and develop slower than the dwarf breeds. No change in feed or introduction of veggies to this breed until 16 weeks. They need more water so use large bowls. They are to be fed unlimited feed until 16 weeks then they eat 2/3 of a cup of manna pro a day and unlimited hay. They also tend to get thin fur on the ears and behind the neck when it is hot outside. This is normal and the fur will return.