

Warranwood Veterinary Centre

The Best of Care for People and their Pets

I've bought a rabbit! Now what do I do?

- ***Take your rabbit for a health check with a rabbit veterinarian***

Most dogs and cats which go to a new home have already had a 'vet check', are vaccinated and microchipped. So should your rabbit!

Care of your new pet rabbit should start with a thorough examination by a rabbit vet. The veterinarian will examine your rabbit for any signs of illness. We provide detailed handouts on husbandry such as what to feed your rabbit, how to house him/her, and preventative health tips to keep him/her happy and healthy.

Ensure your rabbit has regular health checks throughout its life -at least every 6 months

- ***Have your rabbit vaccinated to prevent calicivirus***

All pet rabbits should be vaccinated against calicivirus. Many pet rabbits die from this invariably fatal viral disease - and the sad fact is that these deaths would have been prevented if the rabbits were vaccinated. Vaccination often commences at the time of the first health check.

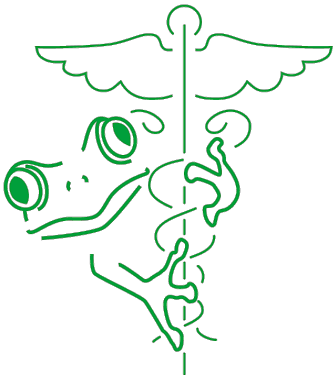
- ***House your rabbit in an appropriate hutch***

Most hutches are not good for rabbits. One of the main problems is wire flooring - this often results in foot problems. If you do happen to have a hutch with wire flooring, place sheets of newspaper or straw down over the wire. Ideally the hutch should be mosquito proof as insects can carry the fatal Myxomatosis and Calicivirus viruses. This can be quite a challenge as some rabbits love putting holes in any fine wire covering the hutch!

- ***Feed your rabbit a diet based on Hay, Grass and Vegetables***

A large percentage of diseases seen in rabbit are directly or indirectly related to the feeding of an inappropriate diet. Fortunately a good diet is easy to find: look in your yard and refrigerator.

Feed a diet based on a large amount of fibrous, leafy foods such as grass, grass hay, and a wide variety of vegetables.



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- **Desex your rabbit**

If you are not going to breed from your rabbit have him or her desexed. If you are going to breed, still have him or here desexed - once breeding has finished.

Female rabbits have an extremely high incidence of uterine cancer (neoplasia)., with approximately 80% being malignant (aggressive) types of cancer. This is age related: the chance of uterine cancer increases as the rabbit gets older. The youngest uterine cancer case we have seen was in a 14 month old rabbit. The chances of a female rabbit older than 6 having uterine cancer is greater than 3 to 1!

Desexing a female rabbit in an essential preventative health measure
We also recommend that male rabbits are desexed. This is not just to prevent your bunnies 'breeding like rabbits', but also drastically decreases the chances of behavioural issues.

Where to from Here?

So now you know a bit more about how to keep your pet rabbit happy and healthy.

Remember, the best approach is to prevent problems occurring is preventative health care.

Please phone us to arrange a visit and allow us to meet your new friend!

Your Rabbit Veterinarian
Warranwood Veterinary Centre (03) 9879-0900