

Vet Care

Rats deserve as much care and responsibility as any other pet and you should be prepared to bring your rats for veterinary treatment should they fall ill.

The most common health problems in rats are respiratory infections. All domestic rats have the bacteria *Mycoplasma pulmonis* in their systems, and at times an infection can flare up. Watch for symptoms of illness such as lethargy, sneezing, wheezing, labored breathing, or excess porphyrin ("red tears"). If your pet rat gets a respiratory infection it should receive immediate veterinary care and treatment with antibiotics.

Rats are prone to tumors, so check them over regularly. If your rat is in good health, tumors can be removed by your vet.

Quarantine

New rats should be quarantined for 3 weeks **in a separate building** to avoid the spread of ailments like SDA and Sendai virus.

More info about quarantine:

<http://tinyurl.com/68s4jy>

Little Mischief Rescue is a new rescue. Our focus is on ferret and rat rescue and welfare, and public education.

We are 100% run by volunteers.

The main chapter is in Vancouver, BC but we have volunteers throughout the province and as far as WA, OR, ID, CA and SK.

We take in abandoned, abused, or unwanted animals and help them find the loving homes they deserve.

We do not have a shelter, which means all of our animals are housed in various foster homes.

We are committed to providing the best possible care for our animals and finding them the best adoptive homes we can.



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Rat Care



Opt To Adopt!

Why rats?

Rats are affectionate, interactive and clean pets. Highly intelligent, they form a strong bond with their human owners, love to hang out with you and can be taught a variety of tricks.

Rats - A Social Creature

Rats are social creatures and need the company of other rats for their mental and physical well being. Unless spayed or neutered, rats should be housed in same sex pairs or groups, from the age of 4 1/2 weeks.

Cage

The bigger the better. You need a minimum of 2 cubic feet per rat. Rats enjoy cages with different levels. Bar spacing needs to be small enough to safely keep the rats inside the cage. Tanks are not suitable for rats due to poor air circulation.

We like the following cages best:

<http://www.martinscages.com/>

<http://www.qualitycage.com/>

<http://midwesthomes4pets.com/>

Bedding

Use dust-free litter like Yesterdays News, Healthy Pet Dust-Free Fiber, corncob or aspen. Absolutely no clumping cat litter, pine or cedar!

Rats can be litter box trained. Place the litter box in the area that they use most frequently. Line the rest of the cage with fleece.

Cage Accessories & Toys

Rats love hammocks and love to have a spot to hide (e.g. plastic pet igloos found in stores). Rats enjoy playing with balls of scrap paper, cardboard boxes, used wine corks, blocks of untreated hardwood, rags (such as old clothes, blankets or towels), PVC tubes, running wheels (solid ones only, not the kind they can get their feet of tail caught in), or fancy store-bought cat, bird or ferret toys.

Exercise

Rats need a minimum of 1-2 hours of exercise outside of their cage per day. The area needs to be rat proof (i.e. no cords they can chew, no access to toxic substances, escape proof), and they need to be closely supervised. Some people have a rat room, other people use their bed as a play area. Martin's Cages makes a wonderful playpen as well.

Diet

Rats should not eat hamster/gerbil food as a staple diet. It contains too much fat and protein and can be detrimental to your pets' health.

The best form of base nutrition for your rat is a soy based lab block, of which there are various brands formulated especially for rats. This should make up 80% of their diet. The other 20% should consist of a variety of fresh foods, especially bright colored vegetables. If you live in an area where it is difficult to obtain proper lab blocks, even a good quality, low fat dog kibble is a better substitute than feeding them hamster/gerbil food.

We recommend Harlan Teklad or Oxbow Regal Rat.

NEVER feed: Licorice, raw beans, onions, garlic, bleu cheese, raw potatoes, chocolate, carbonated drinks, raw cabbage, artichokes, Brussels sprouts, green bananas, rhubarb, or foods that show any signs of decay. Orange juice may be harmful to the health of male rats.

Rats should have fresh water available at all times in a sipper bottle.