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## PET MOUSE CARE

### Vital Statistics

Life expectancy	1 - 2 years	Weaning	18 - 21 days
Breeding	6 weeks	Pregnancy	19 - 21 days
Litter size	7 - 11	Adult body weight	20 - 60g

Mice are a **rodent** animal. They can make ideal pets due to their **small size, ease of care & quiet nature**. They can be very **interactive & sociable** animals who readily accept human companionship. They can become very used to handling, especially if handling is started at a young age. Mice can come in a variety of coat colours & coat lengths.

### Housing

- Mice can be housed in a range of cage types. Provide a **cage as large as possible** and ensure that it is easy to clean & well ventilated. 'Bird cage' type enclosures are better than plastic or glass tubs.
- Ensure that the area that they're kept in will not become too hot as they are prone to heat stress
- Regularly **clean the cage** & change their bedding to avoid ammonia build up
- Suitable bedding materials include shredded paper or pelleted recycled paper 'cat-litter'. Mice love to burrow, so make sure a good thickness of bedding is provided
- Make certain that the cage is **predator proof**
- Provide **boxes and tunnels** for 'hiding' places
- Use **dripper type water bottles**. Water bowls are likely to become soiled
- Mice are sociable animals, consider housing at least 2 together (paired females tend to get on better than paired males). They can also be housed in colonies

### Handling

- Mice can usually be handled quite easily. Pick them up by gently placing your hand(s) under them & be sure to support the full length of their body
- They can also be gently picked up from the base of their tails (for very brief periods)
- Encourage **daily handling** & play/explore time outside of their cage but beware their ability to scurry away!
- Mice should be provided with **daily exercise & mental stimulation** to avert obesity & boredom
- Be sure to **wash your hands** after handling your mice

### Feeding

- Mice are **omnivores** (they eat plant & animal material). They will eat a wide variety of food if offered
- Mice can be offered small amounts of good quality mouse/rat pellets or cubes (ensure they have a protein content of at least 16% & fat content of 4-5%) & ad lib fresh fruits & vegetables daily. Some examples of these include: **Fruit & Vegies:** apples, pears, banana, melons, stone fruits, citrus fruits, broccoli, cabbage, brussel sprouts, endive, carrots, Bok Choy/other Asian greens, celery, parsley, berries, tomato, fresh corn, beans, peas
- Avoid feeding mice a seed/grain mix. Mice are very prone to becoming obese & malnourished on these mixes. They tend to 'select' their favourite bits in the mix
- **Treats** (should only be offered in very small amounts!) Cereals, grains, seeds, breads, biscuits, sweets, cooked pasta & rice, breakfast cereals, chocolate!

### Health and Veterinary Care

- Have any newly acquired pet mouse checked by a vet, especially if you intend to mix the mouse with others. Thereafter have them **checked at least annually**
- At home you should always monitor closely your mice food intake, body condition, eyes, ears, mouth, feet & toiletting behaviour