



Small Animal Nutrition

Nutrition is defined as the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth. It is vital that you provide proper nutrition for your small animal. Their lives may depend on it.

Nutrition effects your pet's health, appearance, lifespan and overall happiness. Every species of animal has their own specific nutritional needs.

Most small animals will be herbivores or omnivores. Herbivores are animals that rely solely on plant matter for their nutritional needs. An example of an herbivore would be rabbits. Omnivores eat a combination of plants and meats. An example of an omnivore would be a rat.



Food and Water

All animals should receive fresh food and water every day. Uneaten meats and vegetables should be taken out of the habitat when the animal is finished eating.

It is recommended that small animals be fed from heavy ceramic crocks or sturdy hanging feeders. Many small animals like to sit on their food dish. Heavy dishes will help avoid spills.

Fresh water can be provided in a water bottle attached to the cage or in another heavy crock. Make sure your water bottle is not hung too high or too low for your small animal. It is also a good idea to make sure the water is flowing freely from the stopper on the water bottle.



Cleaning

It is important to disinfect the food and water receptacles daily. This will help prevent the buildup of bacteria and algae that can make your pet sick. Make sure you rinse the receptacles thoroughly and do not leave any residue from the cleaning product.

What to Avoid

Some food and plant items can be poisonous to your small animal. They include:

- Apple seeds
- Eggplant
- Avocado
- Coffee
- Tomato stems and leaves
- Walnuts

You also want to avoid too many foods high in fat because they can cause gastro intestinal upset.

Also, make sure you keep household chemicals, pesticides and other chemicals away from your pet.

For more information or additional support, please contact our adoption department at (856)424-2288 ext. 100 or adoptions@awanj.org.

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