

Infectious diseases

There are several infectious diseases that could affect your guinea pig's health. Salmonellosis is one type. You can identify this infectious disease when your guinea pig starts to lose weight, has runny or mucky eyes, and shows signs of diarrhoea.

Salmonellosis is often transmitted via contaminated food (greens). You will need to treat your guinea pig with antibiotics, clean the hutch extra carefully and always wash greens before giving it to your guinea pig.

If your guinea pig shows signs of breathing difficulties, it could have an infectious disease called Streptococcosis. This disease makes the lymph nodes larger and will cause your guinea pig much discomfort. This infectious disease is also treated with antibiotics, available from your veterinarian.



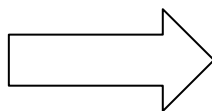
Learn about guinea pigs - Common diseases and disorders, chapter 4

Another common problem with young guinea pigs is conjunctivitis. This causes swollen and mucky eyes.



This disease can clear on its own, but if it does not you can treat it with a topical eye ointment available at your veterinary, or you can try a bowl of lukewarm water with a small amount of kitchen salt. Put half a teaspoon of salt in a small bowl, get a tissue and dip it in the salt water and dab it gently against the guinea pig's eye. If you do this once a day for 2 or 3 days, the eye should clear up.

This young guinea pig had conjunctivitis. Two treatments of lukewarm salty water cleared it up and he is now a happy pig once more.



Digestive system diseases

There are several digestive system problems that could affect your guinea pig. Hairballs are one of them. Hairballs cause your guinea pig a lack of appetite and abdominal pain. This means that your guinea pig will show signs of having pain in its bottom. Consult your vet for advice.

If your guinea pig shows signs of diarrhoea, loss of weight and abdominal pain, your guinea pig could have a disease called bacterial enteritis. Consult your vet for advice.

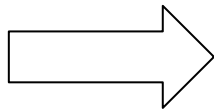


Skin diseases

There are many skin diseases that can harm your guinea pig. If your guinea pig is showing signs of intense itching, hair loss on face and ears your guinea pig could have mange (mites). This disease is very contagious to other guinea pigs. You can treat it with safe insecticidal shampoo or dip. If in doubt, consult your vet.

Hair loss is another very common skin disease. It can occur anytime and anywhere on their body. Guinea pigs don't generally like being bathed but a good bath might do them good. A fresh and clean cage should be prepared for them after their bath. If in doubt, consult your vet.

This four-year-old male guinea pig has hair loss around his ear.



Reproductive disease

Pregnancy toxaemia is a disease that can affect a pregnant guinea pig. This disease causes your guinea pig to not want to eat, depression, breathing difficulties and abnormal behaviour. If your guinea pig has this it is possible to treat it with a medicine called 'dextrose'. Consult your vet for advice.



Nervous system disease

Hind end paralysis is a disease that can also affect your guinea pig. This disease causes your guinea pig not to walk properly and support its own body weight. It is caused usually by spinal cord damage, another reason why you should always hold and support your guinea pig properly.



Musculoskeletal disease

If your guinea pig has trouble bearing its own weight, or it has its leg dragging behind its body it could have hind leg fractures. Feet getting stuck in wire flooring sometimes causes this problem. You should always make sure that your guinea pig's cage is safe for your guinea pig so it doesn't get hurt.



Myopathy is a musculoskeletal disease. It is a disease that causes guinea pig depression and you will find that the pig will be reluctant to move. It is often caused through lack of vitamin E. Lettuce contains vitamin E so you could give your guinea pig washed lettuce on a regular basis.



Provide a short description, symptoms and how to solve the problem of the following diseases and disorders:

1. Salmonellosis
2. Streptococcosis
3. Conjunctivitis
4. Hairballs
5. Bacterial enteritis
6. Mange
7. Pregnancy toxemia
8. Hind end paralysis
9. Myopathy

Learn about guinea pigs - Common diseases and disorders, chapter 4

Disease or disorder, description, symptoms and how to solve the problem;

Disease or disorder	Description	Symptoms	How to solve the problem
1			
2			
3			

Learn about guinea pigs - Common diseases and disorders, chapter 4

Disease or disorder, description, symptoms and how to solve the problem;

Disease or disorder	Description	Symptoms	How to solve the problem
4			
5			
6			

Learn about guinea pigs - Common diseases and disorders, chapter 4

Disease or disorder, description, symptoms and how to solve the problem;

Disease or disorder	Description	Symptoms	How to solve the problem
7			
8			
9			

The following outcomes could be achieved by completing the entire guinea pig theme; *beat boredom, breeding, caring for guinea pigs, diseases and disorders, feeding guinea pigs healthy foods, feeding guinea pigs unhealthy foods, general knowledge, holding guinea pigs, housing guinea pigs, males and females, photos, taming guinea pigs.*

English

- reading
- writing
- alphabetical order
- develop further research skills

Science

- learn about guinea pigs in captivity
- breeding, males and females
- familiarize oneself with diseases that affect guinea pigs
- breeding
- feeding habits
- biological data

Mathematics

- problem solving
- learn about data

Health

- personal hygiene when handling animals
- guinea pig health related issues

Technology

- design, cage and feeding utensils
- research using the Internet
- basic computer knowledge
- Use of camera (or digital camera)

Art

- design and layout
- creative playtime planning for pets
- drawing

Cross curricula based learning
