

Keeping Rabbits and Guinea Pigs safe in the Heat

Rabbits and Guinea Pigs can overheat very quickly, especially when living in wooden hutches and sheds outdoors. Sadly, heatstroke is fatal in most cases so it is important to take precautions during the summer months.

Tips to keep your pets safe

- Move your hutch out of the sun into a cooler place.
- Consider purchasing a cooling mat which can be placed on the floor of the hutch to provide respite from the heat.
- Providing plenty of access to shaded areas is crucial to keeping your pets cool; however, do be mindful about the type of hidey house you use. The inside of a plastic hidey can warm very quickly. Instead, try giving them wooden houses, tunnels, and hay to burrow in or you can even make your own with a cardboard box!



- Marble tiles or slates are brilliant to introduce into a run and keep it cool so your Rabbits or Guinea pigs can lie on it if needed. However, you must ensure the tiles remain in the shade, as the tiles can become extremely hot if placed in direct sunlight.
- Ensure your pets have plenty of fresh, cool water to stay hydrated.

- Rabbits and Guinea Pigs are not good swimmers so please don't encourage them to jump in a pool as the shock could even prove fatal. Instead, try freezing a large bottle of water or ice packs and wrapping them in an old, clean tea towel and place in the hutch. That way, if your rabbits feel hot, they can lie next to the bottle to keep cool.
- Provide cool, leafy green vegetables.



Symptoms of Heatstroke

- Weakness and lethargy
- Panting
- Convulsions
- Salivating
- Restlessness

What should I do if my Guinea Pig or Rabbit suffers heatstroke?

If you suspect that one of your pets is suffering from heatstroke, DO NOT submerge them in cold water because the shock can be fatal. Instead, dampen their fur with a cool, damp cloth and seek veterinary attention.