



How to Nurse your Rat or Mouse at Home

STAY CALM and DON'T PANIC

Rats and mice are prey animals that can pick up on stress quite easily. Staying as calm as you can does often help to keep their stress levels low.

Medicating

Make sure to give any medications that you have been prescribed for your rat or mouse as per the instructions told to you by your vet.

Never self-medicate your rat or mouse without first speaking to a vet. Each medication is different and acts on the body in different ways. Some medications should not be given in certain situations and can make things worse.

Feeding

Always provide your rat or mouse with all their normal food during times of illness. It is best to make any recommended changes to the diet after they have recovered from their illness. Sometimes while they are unwell they can prefer their fresh food to be grated, shredded or warmed which makes it easier to eat. Make sure to discard uneaten vegetables/fruit once spoiled or every 3 – 6 hours. Also always make sure fresh water is available at all times. Sometimes it's a good idea to provide water in both a sipper bottle and a bowl.

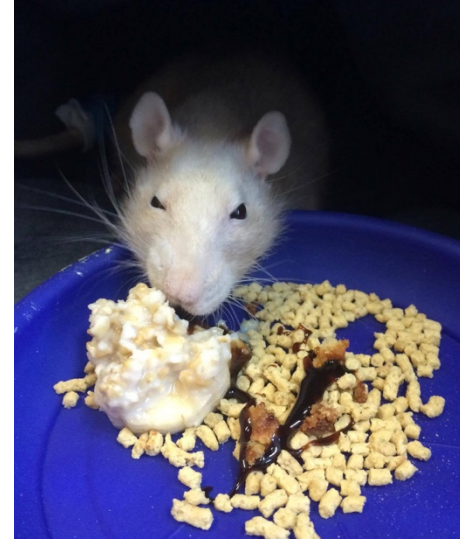
Rats and mice also generally love high energy foods such as Nutrigel so this can be offered in small amounts when they are unwell.

Housing

In most cases it is best to keep your rat or mouse in its normal house to reduce stress. Make sure the hutch/cage/enclosure is cleaned regularly – at least once to twice daily. Also make sure all food and water bowls are easily accessible. If you are able to then it is a good idea to move your rat or mouse's house into a quite spot away from noises, other pets and people.

Other Important Points

It is important to monitor your rat or mouse's faecal and urine output so that you can keep your vet updated on their progress. It is also important to check your rat or mouse's hydration regularly. To do this you can gently pull up some skin (to make a tent shape) at the scruff of the neck on your pet and then release – if the skin bounces back





To normal straight away then it is likely that your pet is not clinically dehydrated. If the skin is slow to return too normal or stays in the tented shape, then your rat or mouse is generally dehydrated. Exercise and movement help to promote gut motility. If the rat or mouse is able, please allow as much free exercise and run around time as possible.

Rat First Aid Kit

The following list is good general guide of what to have on hand at home:

- Left-over medication – Always check with your vet before self-medicating your rat or mouse.
- Nutrigel
- Syringes in assorted sizes– ie. 1 ml, 3 ml, 10 ml
- Towels and blankets
- Box or carry cage
- Heat packs
- Your pet's favourite treats

If your rat or mouse is not improving as expected then it is best to get them rechecked at your vet. Some of the signs that indicate that they may need to be re-examined include not defecating, having more difficulty breathing, becoming dehydrated, getting more lethargic or looking bloated. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

