

Guinea Pig Reproduction

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The timing of the first litter for the female is critical in breeding guinea pigs. While males can be used for breeding purposes any time after they are three or four months old, female guinea pigs should be bred the first time between four and seven months of age. This is related to the separation of certain pelvic bones just prior to delivery.

In the week prior to delivery of a litter, the bones of the pelvis of the female guinea pig begin to separate. By delivery time a portion of the pelvis will have separated to just over an inch in width. If a guinea pig is not bred before seven months of age the bones of the pelvis become fused and unable to separate.

If this condition is not discovered in time, dystocia (difficult delivery) will likely take the life of both the female and her litter. Caesarean section births can be performed by a Veterinarian, but doing surgery on guinea pigs is always risky because of their inability to handle anesthetic well.

Guinea pig gestation is approximately 60 to 70 days, with litter sizes averaging two to five young. Although they are not weaned until 14 to 28 days after birth, guinea pigs are well developed and can see at birth. They are able to eat regular food pellets when they are just two days old.

Because they cannot create Vitamin C as many animals can, all guinea pigs require Vitamin C to be supplied through foods or supplements. Twenty-five mg. a day is usually adequate for a healthy adult Guinea Pig although pregnant females may require more. Vitamin C should be supplied through supplements like Vitakraft Orange Drops and through foods like cabbage, red and green peppers, asparagus, broccoli, peas, tomatoes, kiwi and oranges.

Grasses that provide fiber should also be part of a guinea pig's diet. [Timothy Hay](#) mini-bales and [Kaytee Fiesta food](#) for guinea pigs provide the balanced nutrition and fiber needed to keep young guinea pigs and their parents healthy throughout their life.

Bedding and housing considerations are important when breeding guinea pigs. The normal space recommendation per adult guinea pig is 200 square inches. An enclosure like a [Premium Hutche](#) home measuring 24" x 36" provides ample space to meet this requirement.

Add to the home some [Kaytee Kay-Kob](#) heat dried corn-cob litter or [Aspen Bedding](#) along with some Fluff organic nesting material and your guinea pig will feel right at home.