

## When Chinchillas Attack!

### **How to handle an aggressive chinchilla.**

*By Jessica Cordia*

Posted: April 2, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Chinchillas are very cute and cuddly, but sometimes they turn into fighting beasts. Anne K.G. Bazilwich, a veterinarian at Grand Isle Veterinary Hospital; Paws and Laws in Vermont, explains how to tame pet chinchilla fighters.

#### Reasons For Fighting

From time to time, chinchillas that are caged together will fight. If your chinchillas usually live in harmony, and then randomly start fighting, suspect possible health problems. Usually, health problems will make pet chinchillas more aggressive, so check with your veterinarian if your chinchillas start fighting.

Another reason for fighting could be that your chinchilla isn't neutered. Chinchillas that aren't neutered sometimes become aggressive. If this happens, separate your chinchillas and call your veterinarian. Your chinchillas might have to be neutered if you want them caged together.

If you're thinking about caging two chinchillas together, consider these tips: Usually males and females make the best cage buddies.

Chinchillas that already know each other and are good friends will be great cage companions.

Mothers and baby chinchillas can be caged together.

#### Take Action

If your chinchillas start fighting, separate them immediately! They are obviously not getting along, adding stress to both chinchillas. Give each chinchilla its own environment. Putting each chin in a separate cage in the same room will not alleviate stress. If chinchillas don't like each other, even the sight of the other chinchilla causes stress.

Caging your chinchillas in two separate rooms, completely away from one another, will restore your chinchilla's well-being. Stress will be eliminated, and your pet chinchillas will be happy again.

#### Signs Of Aggression

Sometimes chinchillas are sneaky, check your chinchillas regularly for signs of fighting. Look for fur slip, wounds, abrasion and bites out of ears and tail. The less dominant chinchilla might become shy or timid. It might also stop eating, drinking and taking dust baths.

Before you decide to cage two chinchillas together, think twice about your chinchilla's behavior and lifestyle. If your chinchillas are happy in separate cages, it might be best to leave them that way. A happy chinchilla is a non-aggressive chinchilla.