

Common Chinchilla Dental Problems

Learn the facts about chinchilla dental disease and its signs.

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Chinchilla Dental Disease

Chinchilla dental disease can affect your pet in any stage of life — from baby to older adult. Causes of dental disease include trauma, genetic predisposition or poor dental alignment. The teeth of chinchillas and other rodents grow continuously. Without an appropriate diet and a source to wear down teeth properly, normal tooth growth can also result in chinchilla dental disease.

Malocclusion

Malocclusion is a common chinchilla dental problem. Malocclusion occurs when a chinchilla's front teeth (incisors) or back teeth (molars) fail to grow in proper alignment. This causes uneven wear of the chinchilla's teeth.

Overgrown incisors are easily noticed upon inspection of a chinchilla's mouth. However, it is often difficult to tell if the molars are overgrown. To identify malocclusion, a veterinarian will administer anesthesia to your chinchilla to allow a thorough evaluation of the mouth. The vet may also take X-rays.

Treatment of malocclusion includes trimming and filing affected teeth. Because chinchilla teeth are extremely delicate, only allow an experienced veterinarian to treat chinchilla dental disease, including malocclusion.

Prevention

Check your chinchilla regularly for dental problems by gently lifting its upper jaw to reveal the incisors. Schedule an appointment with your veterinarian immediately if any abnormalities appear. Signs of Chinchilla Dental Disease:

- Change in appetite
- Anorexia
- Dropping food
- Change in food preferences
- Drooling ("Slobbers")
- Wet chin from excess saliva
- Matted fur around the mouth or forepaws from grooming
- Discharge from the eyes or nose
- Weight loss
- Swelling or abscesses along the jaw