

## About Chinchilla's Eyes

### **How many sets of eyes do chinchillas have?**

*By Marty Hull*

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**Q:** I am having a debate with a co-worker. He says chinchillas have two sets of eyes, one set faces forward and the other is at the side of their head to see predators. I've had my chinchillas for five years, and I have never seen, heard or read anything like this. Can you confirm?

**A:** Chinchillas have one pair of eyes. The eyes are positioned on either side of the head to provide a broad range of vision. Chinchillas are nocturnal. The chinchilla eye is well adapted to low light conditions.

In bright light, the iris, which is filled with a very dark, dense pigment, closes completely, shutting out all light. In moderate light, the lower part of the iris opens slightly, similar to the effect of a pinhole camera, allowing in enough light for the chinchilla to see with ease without exposing the nocturnally adapted retina to excessive light exposure.

Some of the above information is paraphrased from the book Chinchilla Diseases And Ailments by A.H. Kennedy, DVM.

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