

Gerbil Extras - Supplements & Treats

All you need to know about supplements and treats for gerbils.

By Jessica Cordia

Your pet gerbil should be eating a hardy diet of pellet rodent chow. This kind of gerbil food is full of nutrients, but there may be instances when you need to alter your gerbil's diet with supplements and treats.

Supplements

Gerbils rarely need supplements. If your gerbil is on a commercial pellet diet, it should be getting all of the nutrients it needs. However, observing your gerbil's eating habits for signs of malnutrition will help determine if you need to start supplementing your gerbil's diet.

Gerald Barker, DVM, Copeland Veterinary Hospital, said that if your gerbil won't eat its blocks or is losing weight, then adding supplements to your gerbil's diet will be necessary. Always contact your veterinarian before giving supplements to your gerbil. Your veterinarian will identify a need for supplements, and they will give you suggestions on what kinds to get.

Treats

Adding treats is a good way to add variety and fun to your gerbil's diet. Some popular treats you can give your gerbil are sunflower seeds, nuts, and almonds; darkly colored vegetables and fruits are tasty treats too.

Only give your gerbil about half of a teaspoon of treats a day. You can put them in your gerbil's food dish, or bury them in its cage bedding. This gives your gerbil a chance to explore its cage for food.

Precautions

Your pet gerbil will enjoy these 'extras' in its diet, but sometimes, your gerbil will overindulge. Monitor your gerbil's weight because it can easily become obese. Barker said, "Seeds are high fat and low calcium foods that need to be used sparingly." If you really enjoy giving your gerbil treats, put a wheel in its cage so it can run off the extra calories.