

# Sugar Glider Care Guide

Prepared by Dr. Lucy Haile on behalf of Wellesley Animal Hospital



Caring for all of your pets

## HOUSING

### Cage:

- Provide the largest cage possible to allow your glider ample space to move around
- Use a wire mesh cage to ensure good ventilation
- Provide multiple climbing branches throughout the enclosure –these should be made from untreated wood/non-toxic plants such as elm, oak or hickory
- Sugar gliders are nocturnal so ensure their cage is not in a high daytime “traffic” area to allow them to sleep during the day



### Bedding:

- Provide several nesting boxes high in the cage
- Always use unscented bedding and avoid cedar and pine shavings – strongly smelling bedding can cause irritation to the nose and lungs and contribute to respiratory disease
- CareFresh or recycled newspaper beddings (e.g. Yesterday’s News) are recommended as they are good absorbable unscented materials
- Ensure to clean the bedding regularly – spot clean the bedding daily and change all the bedding 1-2 times a week

## NUTRITION

- Always have fresh water available
- Appropriate nutrition for your sugar glider can be difficult but is very important in ensuring your glider is healthy. We recommend:
  - 75% diet: good quality commercial pellets such as Exotic Nutrition Premium Sugar Glider Diet
  - 25% diet: fresh fruits and vegetables – make sure it’s a variety and chopped
  - Insects should be given as treats only –ensure they are gut loaded before feeding them
  - We recommend gut loading insects with Mazuri Hi-calcium gut loading formula, at least 48-72 hours before feeding the insects to your sugar glider though this can be always available to your insects
  - Commercial lorikeet or glider nectar can also be offered a few times per week

## BEHAVIOR

- Sugar gliders are sociable animals should be housed as groups of 2 or 3 – be sure to provide adequate cage space and enough nesting boxes
- Provide a variety of toys such as bird toys or a solid bottomed wheel–ensure there is nowhere on the toy where your glider could get feet stuck

## HEALTH CARE

- Sugar gliders by nature hide symptoms and signs of illnesses making early detection of disease difficult
- New patient exams and yearly examinations are therefore strongly recommended to help your sugar glider live a long and happy life. Depending on your sugar glider’s nature anesthesia/sedation may be required for a thorough physical exam

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- Weighing your sugar glider on a weekly basis can help to detect early signs of illness. We recommend purchasing a kitchen gram scale and placing your sugar glider in a small plastic container such as a Tupperware box on this. Try to do it at the same time each day
- If you notice that your glider's weight drops by 10% of its previous body weight contact your veterinarian immediately
- If you notice a gradual decrease in weight contact your veterinarian to discuss causes
- Weighing your glider becomes especially important whenever you are changing the diet or if your glider is sick. Being prepared and getting your sugar glider used to being weighed before these events will decrease the stress during an already stressful time
- If you notice any changes to your sugar glider's behavior, appetite or bowel movements we would recommend contacting your veterinarian immediately