

# Dental Disease

Teeth problems are a common issue with rabbits and other small furries.

Rabbit teeth grow continuously, anything from up to 1-5mm per week which can lead to excessively long teeth, spurs and consequently the development of more serious dental-related disease. Many rabbits suffer from malocclusion, whereby the top and bottom teeth do not quite align so wear becomes uneven or ineffective. The front teeth (incisors) can grow so long that they cause a physical barrier to eating. The cheek teeth (molars) tend to develop spurs and sharp points which make eating painful, and can lead to infections and abscesses.



Vets can perform regular dental treatments on your rabbit if it has problems with its teeth, anything from trimming back the incisors using a dental burr, to removal of the incisors, and also dental work to burr down any sharp cheek teeth. Most of these procedures involve an anaesthetic which can be more risky in rabbits, so prevention is preferable if possible.

Provision of plenty of roughage that encourages your rabbit, or small furry, to use a side to side grinding motion will help keep the teeth worn down. Also other harder materials such as wood blocks to chew on will help.

Keeping a close eye on your small pet to identify signs of possible dental disease early can help prevent a problem from becoming too serious. These signs include;

- Drooling/wet chin
- Dropping food from the mouth
- Selective eating
- Not eating well, or at all
- Weight loss
- Nasal or eye discharge
- Facial swelling

