

Rat Health



Important Medical Information

Your adoption packet contains medical records for your newly adopted rat. These records document all tests that were performed at the SF SPCA. They also contain information about any illnesses or conditions that were diagnosed, what treatment was given, and what kind of follow up, if any, is recommended. **Numerous Bay Area veterinary hospitals provide a FREE post adoption exam within 2 weeks of adoption if scheduled within 3 business days.**

Please take advantage of this offer to have your new animal examined by a veterinarian. Veterinary hospitals that will honor this free exam include:

All Pets Hospital, San Francisco—415-861-5725
VCA Tender Care, San Rafael—415-454-4994
VCA Bay Area, Oakland—510-654-8375

Common Rat Health Problems

As the guardian to a new rat, you should be aware of specific potential health concerns. Please consult your veterinarian as soon as possible if you notice any early indicators of illness.

Common health issues include:

- **Respiratory issues**, mainly Chronic Murine Pneumonia (CMP). Symptoms include sneezing, lethargy, labored breathing, and squinting.
- **Skin issues**. Scabs can appear on rats either due to infestation of mites or lice, or due to a protein allergy.
- **Benign growths, abscesses, and tumors**. Female and overweight rats are more prone to tumors.
- **Bumble foot**, typically caused by wire mesh cage floors, appears as small red bumps that resemble calluses as a result of an infected wound.
- **Obesity**. Make sure to maintain a balanced diet for your rat according to her age and activity level.
- **Teeth**. Rats' teeth never stop growing, and their teeth must be well-aligned to grind down properly. A chipped tooth may cause overgrowth, as may misalignment (malocclusion).