

Northern Oaks

Bird & Animal Hospital

Rabbit Feeding

The internet is full of information and misinformation about the best way to feed bunnies. Rabbit gastrointestinal tracts are actually very sensitive and are designed to be fed a very specific way. Ideally, rabbits should be fed almost completely dry, low quality grasses. Their hindgut ferments this and helps them to produce their vitamins in a very specific part of the intestine called the cecum. When they do not have this as a component of their diet, they can fall victim to the deadly conditions of diarrhea, urinary stones or gastric stasis. Contrary to our instincts, fresh moist vegetables are **not** good for bunnies as an everyday part of their diet. Sadly, with internet advice increasing, veterinarians have observed a tremendous explosion in bunny gastric issues. To keep your rabbit healthy, follow the guidelines below:

1. 80-90% fresh Timothy hay (free choice) daily
2. 10-20% (1/8-1/4 cup) alfalfa pellets daily
3. Fresh water at all times
4. Exercise daily
5. Small amounts of fresh, low calcium greens a few times per week

If a bunny fails to produce stools, has a change in stool texture, stops eating or has urinary issues that should be considered an emergency and warrants a trip to the veterinarian as soon as possible. They can easily become dehydrated and develop worsening gastric issues that can rapidly lead to death. Intervention is essential to try to reverse these issues.

Keep it simple and keep your bunny healthy. Call us with any questions or concerns at 210 496 1315.