

Fancy mice are relatively inexpensive to house and feed, and they take up little space. They are clean, devote time to personal grooming and rarely suffer from ailments.

Fancy mice have been selectively bred for generations to produce exotic strains of coat colour, type and length. Over fifty colours are available but the white mouse still remains a favourite.

Mice are social animals and it is best to keep them in single sex pairs or small groups.

The average life span is one and a half to two years.

## Choosing and buying your fancy mouse

There are many colours available such as Agouti, black and tan and white rumped.

Whichever variety you decide on, your fancy mouse should be 4 weeks old.

A healthy mouse should be:

- Bright and alert

- Have no signs of discharge from eye, ears, mouth and nose

- Have a clean anal area

- Have a glossy coat with no bald patches and no have sores on the skin

- Should have no signs of breathing problems

- Should move around the cage easily with no stiffness or staggering

- Should feel well covered and not bony

## Housing

A plastic cage with a removable base tray is ideal for keeping mice. The cage should be escape proof but well ventilated.

A glass aquarium is also suitable provided it has a secure, well-ventilated lid.

The cage should be furnished with a nest box, ladders or climbing frames and hiding places.

The floor should be covered with a layer of shavings and suitable bedding should be provided in the nest box.

Soiled litter and food should be removed daily. Once a week the cage should be thoroughly cleaned out, disinfected with a pet-safe disinfectant, and new litter and bedding replaced.

Mice can leave an odour and there are new products available that will help to absorb this, our staff will advise.

Fancy mice are indoor pets so they should be kept in an even temperature ideally between 15°C and 27°C. A temperature above 30°C could cause your mouse to suffer from heat stroke.

You should avoid putting the cage in drafts, direct sunlight or in damp or humid conditions.

## Feeding and Water

Mice are omnivores and so will enjoy a varied diet. A complete mix suitable for mice should be the basis of the diet. This can be supplemented with small amounts of fruit and raw vegetables. Uneaten fruit should be removed the next day.

Most mice will enjoy a mineral block which should be available for their use.

Food bowls should be heavy and sturdy, gnaw proof, easily disinfected and cleaned daily.

Fresh drinking water should always be available for your mouse. It should be provided by a water bottle designed to fit your mouse cage.

## Handling

Handling your mouse often will help them build up a relationship with you.

When you first get your mouse home allow him 24 hours to get used to his environment. Allow your mouse to sniff your hands before handling him; this will get him used to your smell.

Gently but firmly hold the base of the tail between the thumb and forefinger and lift your mouse into your cupped hand.

Never pick your fancy mouse up by the end of its tail. A hollow tube can be used to scoop up the animal until confidence is gained.

## General care

Mice normally stay healthy throughout their lives. They can suffer from sneezing and breathing problems. Ensure you are using good quality dustfree woodchips in your mouse s cage. If the condition persists contact your vet.

Your mouse's teeth constantly grow and are worn down. You can help him do this by providing him with a mineral block or wooden chews. Overgrown teeth will result in weight loss and must be treated by clipping.

If you are concerned about your mouse s health speak to your vet.

## Shopping List - all available from Pets Pad

- Cage

- Litter

- Mouse food

- Food bowl

- Toys

- Pet-safe disinfectant

- Book on fancy mouse care

- Nest box

- Bedding

- Mineral block

- Water bottle and bottle brush

- Treats

- Odour control spray

