



### SIGNS OF CONCERN IN RATS

#### **OBSERVE YOUR RATS CLOSELY FOR ANY SIGNS OF STRESS, PAIN, ILLNESS OR INJURY**

- Make sure that you are familiar with your rats and how each individual normally behaves. This will not only help to develop a bond between you and your rats, but will also help you notice if any of your rats are behaving differently, which can be an early sign that something is wrong.
- Your rat could be stressed if they show any of the following, and you should investigate further. If you are at all concerned always seek the advice of your vet.
  - grooming their head and forepaws more than usual;
  - increased aggression;
  - vocalisation;
  - Chromodacryorrhoea;
  - hiding more than usual;
  - increased thigmotaxia;
  - increased fear of novel things;
  - anxious behaviour in a rat which is normally confident;
  - exaggerated escape behaviours;
- Consult a vet immediately if you think that your rat is in pain, ill or injured; or if any of them show any of the following signs:
  - not eating or drinking;
  - not eating previously favoured foods;
  - drinking lots;
  - losing weight, or quickly putting weight on;
  - diarrhoea;
  - avoiding social interaction;
  - starry coat (oily, clumped matted and/or unkempt);
  - not grooming;
  - sneezing, wheezing, or breathing funnily;
  - sunken or dull looking eyes;
  - discharges from their eyes or nose;



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## RSPCA Rat Care Advice

### RSPCA COMPANION ANIMALS PET CARE FACTSHEET



- reduced activity;
- sleeping more than usual (i.e. when your rats would normally be active);
- hunched stiff body posture;
- walking funny;
- not able to balance properly;
- guarding a painful area.



*This pet care sheet has been produced by the RSPCA Companion Animals Department (V1 CAD/KW 11.08.11). This leaflet is provided for general information only and is not intended to be relied upon as specific advice. Whilst we try to ensure that the information is correct, we cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information, nor for any reliance on or use of the leaflet.*