



Love the skin they're in

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Seasonal Snuffles

Guinea pigs can get respiratory problems at any time of the year, but during spring and summer this may not necessarily be due to an infection. The [hayfever season](#) can start as early as February for tree pollen, and from May to September for grass pollen. Hayfever is an allergic reaction to pollen which causes inflammation and irritation to the lining of the eyes, nose and throat.

For any form of respiratory problem it is important to take your guinea to the Vet for a diagnosis sooner rather than later. Symptoms can include:

- a snuffly nose
- discharge from the nose
- sneezing
- wheezing
- coughing
- runny eyes

Bacterial infections are easily treated with antibiotics, but if left, they can turn into pneumonia and be fatal. Where there is mucous in evidence, Bisolvon is often prescribed as well. Systemic fungal infections can cause lung problems and the guinea may wheeze, hence the importance of getting a proper diagnosis so that you know what is going on as well as being prescribed the appropriate drugs.

Guineas do naturally sneeze at times, so it is important that you spend time [watching them every day](#) so that you get to know what "normal" behaviour is for each of them.

Hayfever symptoms can overlap with those mentioned above and may include:

- watery / red eyes
- frequent sneezing, often when bedding has been changed, or new / different hay used
- runny / dripping nose

Symptoms can be worse first thing in the morning due to the pollen rising. On on days when the pollen count is high, symptoms can be worse and improve when the count falls again.

Where bacterial, fungal and viral infections have been ruled out, the problem could be allergy related. If this is the case, there is a safe and effective homeopathic remedy available - [Homeopet Nose Relief](#). We are always looking for products that can be safely used on guinea pigs and never recommend anything without taking it for a thorough test-drive, so you heard it here first!

Homeopet Nose Relief is described as *"a homeopathic remedy used to provide temporary relief from upper respiratory problems including sinus infection and inflammation characterized by red, wet eyes, and nasal drip."*

Nose Relief can be used 3 times a day when the problem first starts - morning, afternoon and bedtime. A piggy dose is 5 drops directly into the mouth (it comes in a dropper bottle). When the symptoms improve, reduce the dose to twice a day, then once a day and discontinue when symptoms are no longer present. Improvements can usually be seen within a day or two and this product has helped a number of guineas with allergies and snuffles that have not been due to infection. Often using Nose Relief for just a few days will do the trick.

Environmental issues can also cause respiratory problems, especially where dusty hay and / or bedding is being used. Simple changes can be made which could include using [Dust Free Hay](#) and flax bedding (Jopack or Equisorb, both types of horse bedding). More information about bedding can be [found here](#). Sometimes you have to work out by process of elimination what is causing your guineas' respiratory problems, and changing the bedding / hay is the first place to start.