



**Ness Exotic Wellness Center
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Guinea Pig

Dental Malocclusion/Slobbers

Slobbers is the condition where the fur under the jaw and down the neck remains wet from constant drooling of saliva. The primary cause for this condition is overgrowth of the guinea pig's premolars and/or molars. Most often this occurs in older (2-3 years of age) guinea pigs and usually involves the premolars (the most forward positioned check teeth). The overgrowth is due to improper alignment of the teeth when chewing, and excess selenium in the diet has also been incriminated. Trauma to the jaw can result in abnormal wearing of the teeth. The overgrown tooth causes injury to the guinea pig's tongue resulting in an inability to chew and shallow food, drooling down the chin and neck, and weight loss (often severe).

A veterinarian must be consulted as soon as this condition is suspected. The diagnosis is confirmed by visual examination of the mouth. Correction of the problem involves trimming or filing of the overgrown teeth, usually requiring general anesthesia. Dental work in the mouth of a guinea pig is difficult due to the extremely small mouth opening. A correction of the diet may also be in order if an elevated selenium level is suspected. In addition, force feedings and antibiotics may be necessary to aid in the recovery.

There is no permanent solution or correction to this problem. Periodic trimming or filing of the teeth is usually necessary. Guinea pigs with this problem should not be bred since dental malocclusion is often hereditary.

