**Parakeet (budgie) Facts Facts**

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| **Average Adult Size** | 7 inches long, head to end of tail |
| **Average Life Span** | 10 to 20 years with proper care |
| **Diet** | herbivores |

*Bird pet parents should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release fumes hazardous to your bird's health.*

**Diet**

A well-balanced parakeet diet consists of:

* Specialized pellets should make up 60 to 70% of diet, plus fresh vegetables, fruits and small amounts of fortified seeds.
* Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water, changed daily.
* Do ***not*** feed birds avocado, fruit seeds, chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar and high fat treats.

**Feeding**

Things to remember when feeding your parakeet:

* Fresh food and water should always be available.
* Vegetables and fruits not eaten within a few hours should be discarded.
* Treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake.

**Housing**

* Medium parakeets acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F; be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.
* Parakeets acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to drop below 65°F or to exceed 80°F; be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.
* A habitat approximately 18"W x 18"D x 18"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1/2" apart, makes a good home for one parakeet. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible.
* Perches should be at least 4" long and 3/8" in diameter; a variety of perch sizes to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended.
* A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird away from droppings; line the droppings tray with habitat paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches.
* Parakeets can be kept alone to bond with pet parent or in pairs to bond with each other. Different types of birds should ***not*** be housed together.

**Normal Behavior**

* Parakeets are talkers, but their little voices are sometimes hard to hear.
* Active and need daily time out of their habitats to interact with family.
* Keep in pairs if unable to devote daily interaction time.
* Provide foraging toys, which provide important mental stimulation.

**Habitat Maintenance**

* Clean and disinfect the habitat and perches regularly with a 3% bleach solution; replace substrate or habitat liner weekly or more often as needed.
* Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged; rotate new toys into the habitat regularly.
* Ensure that there are no habitat parts or toys with lead, zinc or lead-based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird.
* Do not use a lot of cleaning agents around your bird as the fumes can be harmful. It is recommended to use a natural cleaning product.

**Grooming & Hygiene**

* Provide filtered, chlorinefree, lukewarm water regularly for bathing; remove the water when done. As an alternative, mist the bird with water.
* Clipping flight feathers, when done correctly, can help prevent injury or escape; consult an avian veterinarian on what is best for your bird.
* Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.

**Health**

**Signs of a Healthy Animal**

* Active, alert, and sociable
* Eats and drinks throughout the day
* Dry nares and bright, dry eyes
* Beak, legs and feet normal in appearance
* Clean, dry vent
* Smooth, well-groomed feathers

**Red Flags**

* beak swelling or accumulations
* fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers
* sitting on floor of habitat
* wheezing or coughing
* runny or discolored stools
* favoring one foot when not sleeping
* eye or nasal discharge
* red or swollen eyes
* loss of appetite

**Common Health Issues**

| **Health Issue** | **Symptoms or Causes** | **Suggested Action** |
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| Chlamydiosis | Appetite loss, fluffed feathers, nasal discharge, lime green feces and conjunctivitus. | Seek immediate avian veterinary attention. |
| Diarrhea | Fecal portion of stool is not formed. Multiple causes from diet change to internal parasites. | Consult with an avian veterinarian and ensure proper diet. |
| Feather plucking | Bird plucks own feathers; may be due to boredom, poor diet or other illness. | Consult your veterinarian and relieve boredom with attention, new toys or more room. |
| Mites (scaly face and leg disease) | White deposits on eyes, beak, legs, and feet. | Consult your veterinarian. |