

# Basic Bathing & Grooming



KATHRYN MCKAY (WILLOWMIST CAVIES)

## A QUICK GUIDE

One of the chores that all owners need to learn to do correctly is bath and groom their cavies. Bathing cavies can be made easier with a little common sense and preparation. Generally all cavies should be presented bathed and clean, with their toenails trimmed regardless of whether they are entered in pet or pedigree classes.

This is what you will need:

- Gentle Shampoo
- Eucalyptus oil
- Cotton Balls
- Warm water for bathing and rinsing
- A flat bottomed container or sink
- Plenty of towels
- Hairdryer
- A soft brush and comb
- A jug

Gather all your equipment before you get your cavy. Some cavies enjoy being bathed, but many do not and will fight and scratch the person holding them to avoid the water.

Fill the container (or sink) with warm water so that the cavy can still touch the bottom and have its head above water. Squirt a very small amount of shampoo into the water and stir it with your hand. Gently lower the cavy into the water, taking to ensure the animal's face is not forced under. A struggling cavy can easily inhale water into its lungs with tragic consequences. Always make sure you are securely holding your cavy. Some may jump to try and escape.

With one hand holding the cavy, use your other hand to swirl water through the coat. Use your hand to wet down the head, trying to avoid getting water into the animal's ears. Clean the vent area in females and males. In males there is the added task of cleaning the scrotum sack. If this is not done it can fill with a thick and smelly combination of faeces and other fluids causing the boar to become impacted. Boars also need their grease gland cleaned. After washing rinse with clean warm water. One of the easiest ways of doing this is have a jug of warm water on hand to pour gently over the animal. It is very important to remove any trace of shampoo, so this step may need to be repeated.

The cavy must be dried quickly and thoroughly, especially during the colder months. Towel dry to get as much excess water off, then blow dry on a cool, mid speed setting. It is very important not to over heat the cavy while using the hairdryer. While blow drying brush in the direction of the coat.



BATHING



TOWEL DRYING



BLOW DRYING