

Rodents in First Opinion Practice - Zoom

This rodent CPD day for first opinion vets and nurses is designed to build practical skills and confidence in managing rodent patients, covering the essentials of rodent consultations, handling and restraint, species-specific diagnostics, common conditions, and emergency care. Participants will learn how to conduct thorough, low-stress consultations, recognise normal versus abnormal findings across common pet rodent species, utilise appropriate diagnostic approaches, and apply safe medication and pain management protocols. The course also explores frequently encountered medical conditions in rodents, with guidance on case management, client communication, and recognising when referral is indicated. With a strong focus on practical decision-making and emergency assessment, this CPD equips vets and nurses with the knowledge and confidence to assess, stabilise, and manage rodent patients in first opinion practice.

09:00-09:05: Delegates log on to zoom platform

09:05-09:50: The Rodent Consult

This presentation provides a practical, clinically focused overview of rodent consultations in veterinary practice, covering species identification, client communication at reception, transport and waiting room considerations, detailed history taking, safe handling, and systematic clinical examination. Emphasis is placed on recognising species-specific anatomy, behaviour, normal parameters, common diseases, nutritional requirements such as vitamin C in guinea pigs, and appropriate medication choices, equipping clinicians with the confidence and knowledge required to manage rodent patients effectively and minimise stress throughout the consultation

09:50-10:00: Q and A

10:00-11:00: Anaesthesia and Analgesia in Rodents

This lecture takes you through how to perform a clinical examination in the most common rodent species seen in practice (guinea pigs, chinchillas, rats, hamsters, and gerbils). The normal parameters to expect in these species, ideal handling methods, blood sampling techniques and possible injection sites. The importance of pre-medications and why multimodal anaesthesia and analgesia are vitally important, as well as drug options, for pre-medications, induction and maintenance are discussed in length. Rodent intubation, ventilation and anaesthetic monitoring, as well as the importance of a safe recovery, through too discharge, fluid therapy and pain assessment in this species is discussed extensively.

11:00-11:10: Q and A

11:10-12:40: Rodent Dentistry – The Do's and Don'ts

This talk on rodent dentistry focuses on the practical do's and don'ts of diagnosing and managing dental disease in commonly presented rodent species, including guinea pigs and chinchillas. It emphasises understanding normal dental anatomy and physiology, recognising early clinical signs, taking a thorough history, and performing appropriate clinical and imaging assessments. The session provides clear guidance on safe anaesthesia, stomatoscopy, coronal reductions, extractions, abscess management, and post-operative care, while addressing common pitfalls and owner expectations.

With prevention and welfare at its core, this talk equips clinicians with the knowledge and confidence to manage rodent dental disease effectively in first opinion practice

12:40-12:50: Q and A

12:50-13:30: Lunch

13:30-14:40: The Emergency Rodent Patient

This talk focuses on the recognition, triage, and stabilisation of the emergency rodent patient, highlighting the unique challenges posed by prey species that often present at an advanced stage of disease. It provides a structured, practical approach to emergency and critical care, covering transport, hospitalisation, rapid assessment, and stabilisation principles including oxygen therapy, thermal support, fluid therapy, nutritional support, and analgesia. Emphasis is placed on minimising stress, prioritising stabilisation before handling, and adapting standard ECC principles to rodent species, ensuring clinicians are equipped to confidently assess, stabilise, and manage critically ill rodent patients in first opinion practice

14:40-15:50: Common Conditions in Rodents: Part 1

This session provides an in-depth overview of common medical conditions encountered in rodent practice, with a particular focus on guinea pigs and rats, highlighting the implications of their prey status and tendency to mask clinical signs. It covers key disease processes including dental disease, gastrointestinal stasis and bloat, urolithiasis, reproductive disorders, respiratory disease, parasitism, dermatological conditions, and neoplasia, integrating clinical presentation, diagnostic approaches, and practical management strategies. The talk equips clinicians with a structured understanding of frequently encountered rodent conditions, supporting timely recognition, appropriate intervention, and informed decision-making in first opinion practice

15:50-16:50: Common Conditions in Rodents: Part 2

This session builds on Part 1 by exploring common medical and surgical conditions affecting gerbils, chinchillas, and hamsters, with an emphasis on species-specific physiology, husbandry-related disease, and practical clinical management. It covers key presentations including dermatological, dental, gastrointestinal, respiratory, neurological, reproductive, endocrine, and neoplastic conditions, alongside guidance on diagnostics, treatment options, and prognosis. By highlighting the importance of stress reduction, appropriate drug choice, and realistic client communication, this talk supports clinicians in confidently managing a wide range of rodent presentations in first opinion practice

16:50-17:00: Q and A and closing comments

