

## Feeding your rabbit a healthy diet

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Your rabbit will also pass larger, stickier droppings called caecotrophs, which contain partially broken down fibre. Your rabbit will usually eat these so that he/she can fully digest the fibre. This is normal behaviour. Caecotrophs are often eaten as soon as the rabbit passes them, and most often at night, so you may not notice this happening. If your rabbit has difficulty turning around (due to being overweight, stiff or in pain) or has dental problems, it may not be able to eat the caecotrophs. This can lead to clumps of them forming around the rabbit's bottom, which could lead to skin infections and other problems. You should check the area around your rabbit's anus and genitalia for soiling, ideally every day, especially in the summer months.

### Preventing 'fly strike'

Any build-up of urine and faeces around your rabbit's bottom or soiled bedding can attract flies, which could lead to 'fly strike' – this is where flies lay eggs that hatch into maggots on the rabbit. Fly strike can be prevented in a number of ways:

- Replace wet and soiled bedding daily
- Use fly screens in the hutch
- Clean off any urine or droppings stuck around the rabbit's bottom using lukewarm water, taking care not to get the whole of the rabbit soaking wet so it doesn't become too cold. Towel dry the fur (hairdryers can become very hot, causing rabbits to overheat or develop burns). ***If you notice that your rabbit has a wet or soiled bottom, an examination by your vet is advised to try and find the underlying reason for this.***