

Welcome to the Luv-N-Bunns foster network! We're so excited and grateful that you can help us. To keep all of our animals healthy and happy, we've set up a standard of care for them, which is detailed below. Feel free to direct all questions to Liz ([lizzymcneil@hotmail.com](mailto:lizzymcneil@hotmail.com)).

Perhaps the most important thing about being a foster is that you inform us immediately if you'd like to adopt your current foster bunny. We are thrilled to have foster fails (which all of us have personally become as well, haha) but we need to know BEFORE we screen and approve an applicant for your foster bunny. Once approved, the adopter has first choice and we are unable to allow you to adopt them once this process is set in motion. So just remember, tell Liz right away if you'd like to keep your foster bunny!

The next most important thing- if you know someone who would like to meet your foster bunny and potentially adopt them – have them email Liz right away. No one is permitted to meet the animals until their application has been screened and fully approved!

Also, please don't change the name of your foster bunny(ies). Their names are already connected to their file, paperwork and vet records so we will try to keep everything consistent.

**I. Care**

- a. **Feeding:** all Luv-N-Bunns bunnies should be fed according to the standards below. If any health problems arise due to improper feeding or care, the foster will be held financially responsible for any and all costs associated with treatment.
  - i. **Pellets:** Oxbow adult timothy pellets for all bunnies over 7 months of age. Please feed ¼ cup daily per 5-6lb of body weight. Since most average bunnies fall within this weight range, we suggest ¼ cup as a universal amount once a day for all adult bunnies. Please do not feed more than ¼ cup unless you have specific instruction from Liz. Also, please do NOT feed any pellets with colored bits, treats, or mixed pieces. The only acceptable pellets for our rabbits are Oxbow, Sherwood Forest, or Small Pet Select, as well as Kaytee Timothy pellet – although Kaytee is discouraged in lieu of the three other brands.
  - ii. **Hay:** All bunnies age 7 months and older should receive UNLIMITED timothy hay each day. Our suggested sources for hay are Oxbow, Small Pet Select, and Bingaling Bunny Box. Kaytee is also good, although the bunnies tend to prefer the other brands. Bale hay is prohibited as we've had continuous problems with mold, mites and other infectious organism exposure from this hay. If used, you will be responsible for all veterinary costs incurred from the use of this hay. If you develop an allergy to Timothy hay, we can switch to Oxbow orchard grass instead, which is a safe option. Adult bunnies DO NOT get alfalfa hay – this will result in bladder sludge, kidney stones, and a painful and expensive recovery for the rabbit.

- iii. **Greens:** Our rabbits should receive 1-2 cups of leafy greens daily. Good choices are Romaine lettuce (never iceberg), kale (in moderation, see handout), parsley, basil, dandelion greens (store bought – if used from outside, must be guaranteed pesticide free), spring mix, escarole, endive, etc. Please see attached handout for more choices. Make sure all greens are well rinsed and fed wet, which helps increase the fluid intake for the bunny.
- iv. **Treats:** we encourage moderation in treats dispensation. The ONLY approved treats for our foster bunnies are those manufactured by oxbow, **or** one of the websites in the attached “toys and treats” document (several healthy options on these websites). If unsure about a specific treat, just shoot us an email to clarify.

DO NOT use yogurt drops, colored treats from the pet store, nuts seeds, and under no circumstances should our rabbits be fed any type of human food, cracker, or table food of any kind. We suggest one small oxbow treat every *other* day or better yet, one small (1 teaspoon full) of fruit or carrot piece a few times a week. A rabbit’s digestive tract is not designed for foods high in sugar content, and will typically result in life-threatening GI stasis and other health complications due to improper diet and weight. Upsetting a rabbit’s delicate bacterial balance with sugary foods often results in complete GI stasis and can result in death of the animal in a very short period of time.
- v. **Young Rabbit Diet:** If you are fostering rabbits under 7 months of age or a mother/nursing babies, please contact Liz for specific diet requirements.
- vi. **\*\*Please try to buy a small bag of oxbow critical care, preferably the apple banana flavor, and keep it in the freezer for emergencies.** It’s around \$17 on Amazon but we can help you obtain some if you need assistance. This is so important if stasis sets in.

## II. **Housing**

- a. Foster rabbits are to be housed indoors at all times. Outdoor hutches are prohibited. Under no circumstances will the fosters be allowed outside for ANY reason unless being transported in a carrier to the vet or an adoption appointment. Allowing a foster outside on the grass, even while supervised, is strictly prohibited. We’ve had countless instances in which a rabbit brought outside, even for a short time while supervised, has been injured, acquired a parasitic infection, or has been attacked by an animal/captured by bird of prey. Please contact Liz for further clarification on housing indoors, especially if you need ideas of how to set up pens and enclosures.



b. Items needed for housing:

- i. **Litter box**- we've found that the medium size rectangular litter boxes for cats are great! We use a lot of "Boots and Barkley" litter boxes that can be found at Target and Giant grocery store for under \$5. The litter we recommend is either carefresh natural (not the colored versions, these are expensive), oxbow eco straw, kaytee clean and comfy, any paper based litter like yesterdays news or similar brands, or wood stove pellets. There is no reason to use litter or bedding in the entire cage or enclosure, just the litter box. This way the rabbit will know where to go to the bathroom and it'll save a lot of money. Rabbits can NOT use cat litter of any kind, only paper based litter. Wood shavings are also discouraged as many types are toxic to bunnies and should be avoided at all times. You may also opt to put a pile of timothy hay on one side of the litter box. A bunny enjoys sitting in their box, munching hay and going to the bathroom at the same time. Any wet or soiled hay should be removed. Hay does not take the place of litter, and should only be placed in one small area of the litter box or in a separate box or hanging hay buffet.

- ii. **Grooming/care:** Rabbits are meticulous groomers, but sometimes do need some help. They NEVER need a bath, and should never be wet or washed. Contact Liz directly if your foster bunny experiences “poopy butt” or becomes dirty for any reason. This is typically a sign of a more serious complication due to poor diet and must be rectified immediately. Despite being self-sufficient in the grooming department, rabbits will need periodic brushing with a soft brush and also nail trims. We can provide you with more info on this if needed, but basically I like to pull off any shedding fur with my hands and follow up by brushing with a nice, soft bunny brushes. Wire cat brushes are too sharp for delicate rabbit skin. The “furminator” can work well for removing loose undercoat. Weekly brushing helps keep them healthy and is typically very enjoyable to a bunny when done gently and if they’re unrestrained.
  
- iii. If you currently have rabbits of your own or other foster rabbits, all must be kept separate and not allowed to interact under any circumstances. Unlike dogs, rabbits don’t “play” and socialize casually. Rabbits either fight or bond. Fighting will result in serious injury and a lot of territorial marking . Bonding is usually a process, but it can sometimes happen instantly, in which case we do not separate the bonded pair but we’d have the foster parent now adopt the new bunny and keep them together with their current bunny under all circumstances for the remainder of their lives.

### III. ***Veterinary Needs***

- a. All of our foster rabbits go to our participating veterinarian, Radnor vet, 107 N. Aberdeen Ave, Wayne PA 19087. Liz handles all appointments and communication with the veterinarians. If at any time your foster needs a vet appointment, email [lizzymcneil@hotmail.com](mailto:lizzymcneil@hotmail.com) immediately and she will arrange it for you. You provide the transportation, but Liz and the doctors make all medical decisions and future appointments. DO NOT leave your contact info with the vet. They have a strict policy that they do not interact directly with fosters, but go through Liz as a liaison for all care and instructions.  
  
\*\*If you experience a true emergency and it is after hours, do NOT hesitate to take the bunny directly to the University of Pennsylvania Ryan school of veterinary medicine! Liz will see your messages most of the time, but if this happens in the middle of the night, please be aware that this is the only option for emergency care. We are a recognized rescue with them, just tell them who you are and give them all of the animal’s info. They will expect payment up front, so bring a credit card and LNB can reimburse you. This is a very rare occurrence and is not something to be concerned about.\*\*
  
- b. If your foster is being neutered/spayed, please follow the instructions below:

- i. Drop off your bunny on the pre-assigned day between 8:30am – 9:00am. If needed, the bunny can be dropped off as early as 7am if entering through the dog park entrance, which faces Aberdeen Ave and has red paint around the door and is located next to the Bar method.
- ii. Once surgery is complete, Liz will contact you via email or text to let you know any post care instructions and the time you can pick up your foster. The vet won't call you directly, Liz is your point of contact for everything.
- iii. Any veterinary concerns are to be directed to Liz and she will arrange for any needed follow up treatment or care.

- iv. *Neuter/Spay post care:* many of our foster bunnies are neutered/spayed in the care of their foster family. If this is the case for you, please do NOT fast your bunny prior to surgery. Allow them to eat a normal diet the entire time before drop off.

Post surgery – NO pain meds will be given unless otherwise specified. Long-lasting injections of pain meds are given during surgery and administering any additional medication will result in further complications and a dangerous situation for the bunny. Please keep the rabbit confined for 3-4 days post surgery, preventing any high jumping or fast hopping. Check incision for any redness, swelling, or any indication that the rabbit has been chewing at the site. Please note the rabbit's food intake and output, especially within the first 12-24 hours post surgery. Typically they are quite drowsy for the remainder of the day following surgery, but should be up and eating/pooping by the following day. Any delay in intake or output should be brought to our attention immediately.

\*Please note: the fur around their eyes will look greasy/wet following surgery, and this is normal. This results from a gel placed on the eyes during surgery and should not be a source of concern.