



Simple skincare solutions
for Guinea Pigs

www.gorgeousguineas.com

Gorgeous Guineas

Product Information Guide

November 2011





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Gorgeous Guineas Product Information

Gorgeous Guineas created the world's first and only range of Aromatherapy products designed specifically for the needs of guinea pigs. All our products are handmade in small batches to ensure freshness. They contain gentle, natural ingredients with the minimum of preservatives and no artificial colours. Since 2003, our simple skincare solutions have helped thousands of guineas to look gorgeous again, including many with serious fungal and parasitic skin problems. Trial sizes of the products are available for you to test-drive before purchasing larger sizes.

All our products come with an instruction sheet. Most of them should NOT be used on pregnant sows as they contain Essential Oils, however we have also created a small range of products that are suitable.

Conditioning Shampoos

Our handmade shampoos are made using gentle ingredients that are kind to your guinea's skin. They lather well, smell lovely, and can help the condition of your guinea's skin when used regularly. We recommend that you shampoo your guineas every 4-6 weeks as this may help to prevent skin problems from occurring.

Available in 5 different varieties:

- **Kind & Gentle Shampoo** – designed especially for guineas under 12 weeks if they need a gentle and relaxing shampoo. Also good for guineas with sensitive skin and for Rex guineas. Replaces the Lavender & Mini Pig Shampoos.
- **Lemon Tea Tree & Lavender** – a lovely fresh smelling shampoo, with relaxing Lavender and citrusy Lemon Tea Tree.
- **Just for Boars** – woody Sandalwood & Cedarwood for the boar who wants to be fragrant without the flounce!
- **Cedarwood & Lemongrass EasiRinse** - with an added conditioning ingredient. Rinses out very easily leaving the hair really soft and silky.
- **Posh 'n' Go** – luxury shampoo with three conditioning ingredients. Designed specifically for long haired guineas. Leaves the hair soft and manageable without the need for conditioner. Bad hair days can be a thing of the past!



Problem Solving Shampoos

Our two Problem Solving Shampoos have added active ingredients to help with specific skin problems:

- **Lice 'n' Easy** – effectively washes away Lice which are notoriously difficult to shift.
- **Manuka & Neem** – for use in conjunction with CocoNeem Melt where guineas have a fungal skin problem. Excellent for removing scurf and debris from the skin.





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Marvellous Melts

Marvellous Melts are based on Coconut Oil and are quick and easy to apply. They are left on for just 20 minutes before shampooing off, leaving your guinea with lovely clean skin and a large "Fluffiness Factor".

Available in 2 varieties:

1. **CocoNeem Melt** - for use where your guinea has a fungal skin problem. We recommend that you use Manuka & Neem Shampoo to remove this Melt as it works brilliantly where there is dry, scurfy skin that needs removing.
2. **Aloe Melt** - great for dry skin, for softening crusts and for nourishing dry ears, feet and nipples. Especially useful for guineas that are prone to dry skin such as Rex's. Can be used as a pre-shampoo treat every month



Kwench Lotion

Kwench Lotion now replaces both the Lavender & Myrrh and Manuka Lotions and has turned into one of our "hero products". We've combined the best of everything into this one lovely lotion, as well as adding Calendula Extract to make it even more effective. Calendula is great for sore, itchy, inflamed skin conditions.

Kwench Lotion is designed for use in-between Melts to help your guinea's skin, or to help small areas where there is a fungal problem. A small amount is applied two or three times a day and rubbed gently into the skin. It has proved particularly effective around sensitive ear and eye areas. Kwench Lotion is also useful for guineas under 12 weeks with fungal skin problems - Melts are not recommended for guineas below this age. The Lotion is light, non-greasy and easily absorbed by the skin.



Soothe Gel

Available in two varieties:

1. **Aloe Vera Sooth Gel** - plain gel, no Essential Oils, so safe to use on pregnant sows. It is soothing, cooling and can help to reduce heat and redness in the skin.
2. **Neem Soothe Gel** - Aloe Vera Gel with Neem and Lavender. Brilliant for calming irritated skin where there is a lot of scratching / scabbing.

Apply the gel two or three times a day until the condition improves.





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Foot Problems

Ointments are usually made with beeswax and vegetable oils, but we've made ours with a vegetable wax so it is suitable for vegans and vegetarians who apply it to their animals! These ointments are easy to apply and readily absorbed whilst leaving a wax film to protect the skin.

- **Perfect Paws Ointment** will soften and soothe those forgotten feet, treating them with the care they deserve. Put the popcorn back into your guinea's step. Hard, cracked skin is now a thing of the past. Dogs with sore paws can also benefit from using this ointment. It has been given the thumbs up by a dog groomer in Wales who regularly uses our products on dogs!
- **F&M Ointment** has been designed for guineas with Bumblefoot (Pododermatitis), a swelling / ulceration of the foot pad that can be very painful for a guinea. The condition is often bacterial in origin, but can also be fungal and can be difficult to treat. It can also be used for guineas with scabs around the nose or mouth area. **Contains NUT products.**



MicroNeem

Many guineas have skin irritations at some point in their life. MicroNeem is quick, easy and economical to use and can calm and soothe irritated skin. Based on Neem Oil that has been emulsified, it mixes easily with warm water. The solution is sponged over the guinea with no oily residue. It works for both fungal and parasitic problems, calming down skin that is hot and / or irritated due to scratching and biting.

On several occasions where there has been an unidentified skin problem that has not been sorted out with any other product, MicroNeem has come to the rescue.



Pregnant Sow Products

We don't recommend that you use any products containing Essential Oils during guinea pig pregnancy as they haven't been tested for safety. For pregnant humans, there are restrictions on the Essential Oils that can be used during each of the trimesters, so for pregnant guineas we always err on the side of caution.

Products that can be used for pregnant sows with skin problems are:

- **Pregnant Sow Shampoo** – for a gentle shampoo.
- **Calendula Lotion** – for fungal skin problems.
- **Pregnant Sow Lotion** – for fungal skin problems (**contains NUT products**).
- **Pregnant Sow Gel** – for fungal skin problems (**contains NUT products**).
- **Aloe Vera Gel** – cooling / soothing for irritated skin, especially after giving birth.
- **Super Soufflé Cream** – for dry / crusty ears and crusty nipples.





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Do I Have A Fungal Or Parasitic Problem?

Guinea pigs have very sensitive skins (hence their use in testing cosmetics and skin care products), and are prone to both fungal and parasitic skin problems which often appear at the same time. Fungal skin infection is a particular problem in the UK. Guinea pigs are originally from Peru where the climate is warm and dry. Here, there is always moisture in the air - cold and damp in the winter, and hot and humid in the summer. Often guineas get fungal and parasitic problems at the same time, so if in doubt have them treated for both.

Lice are very common in guineas and can be seen with the naked eye: www.gorgeousguineas.com/parasitic.html

Fungal problems and Mange Mites can be more difficult to identify, so here are some pointers to help you:

Typical Symptoms of Fungal Infections	Typical Symptoms of Mange Mites
• Very greasy hair and / or skin that is red (rather than a healthy pink colour). Often it will feel hot to the touch.	• Thinning hair with bald areas only in the area of infestation.
• Heavy, gritty scurf (like dandruff). There may be white tide marks on the ears and / or jagged edges.	• Hair shafts broken off half way down to the root around the area of infestation.
• Hair falls out with a light tug, and there will often be dead skin on the end.	• Hair will not come out when lightly tugged.
• Scratching, biting and squeaking when they are touched on sensitive areas such as the rump.	• Little bumps / blood / scabs on the skin surface - this can indicate Mites just below the skin.
• If the infection is bad, there may be thick crusty patches of skin, extensive hair loss, considerable scratch lesions, and the guinea may even be fitting.	• Intense scratching / biting / irritation. Where there are Mites on the back, the guinea will often bite itself and in the middle you may see a V-shaped area of hair loss.

Once you have figured out which one it is, please visit our website for further information on fungal and parasitic problems:

www.gorgeousguineas.com/fungal.html

www.gorgeousguineas.com/parasitic.html

www.gorgeousguineas.com/photogallery.html

It is important to check the condition of your guinea's skin regularly and treat them as early as possible if you suspect any type of a skin problem. Fungal and parasitic problems can take hold very quickly and become very difficult to treat when left. In the meantime the guinea is suffering. Please don't take skin problems lightly – guineas have been known to die if they are not treated promptly.

This information is for guidance only and is not a replacement for proper Veterinary diagnosis and treatment.



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What Common Skin Problems Look Like



Mange Mites



Running Lice



Nose Sores



Fungal Skin Infection



Fungal Face



Fungal Ear



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Ringworm



Bumblefoot

For more information about these conditions, go to: www.gorgeousguineas.com/photogallery.html



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Quick Product Recommendations

Preventative Maintenance: Guineaas that are bathed every 4-6 weeks, kept in the correct environment and on appropriate bedding (ie not wood shavings / sawdust) are less likely to get skin problems than those that are not. Any of our Shampoos can be used for this purpose. If the guinea has never had a skin problem, use one of the Conditioning Shampoos. If the guinea has had fungal skin problems, use the Manuka & Neem Shampoo instead. Check out www.gorgeousguineas.com/toptips.html for more information and useful tips.

For pregnant sows: ONLY use the products recommended as being suitable and not containing Essential Oils.

Small areas of fungal skin (eg around the face, nose, ears): Kwench Lotion. If there are thick crusts, use Super Soufflé Cream for a few days to soften the crusty areas, and once they improve and start coming away, use the Kwench Lotion.

Large areas of fungal skin: CocoNeem Melt / Manuka & Neem Shampoo / Kwench Lotion, or if there are thick crusts, use Super Soufflé Cream for a few days to soften the crusty areas before attempting to do anything else.

Lice / external parasites: Lice 'n' Easy Shampoo.

Mouth / Nose Sores: F & M Ointment.

Fungal nose strips: Kwench Lotion.

Ringworm: MicroNeem / Manuka & Neem Shampoo / Kwench Lotion.

Sore Feet: Perfect Paws Ointment where there is just a small amount of redness / tenderness or hard, cracked skin.

Bumblefoot: F & M Ointment. Can also be used on ears where there are thick crusts.

Cracked / Sore / Crusty Nipples: F & M Ointment or Super Soufflé Cream.

Urine Scald: Perfect Paws Ointment.

Mange Mites: MUST be treated with Ivermectin by your Vet as the live under the skin rather than on it. Most Vets will now recommend Xeno 50 (guineas under 800gms) or Xeno 450 (guineas over 800gms) rather than injections, which can be very painful for guineas. Follow the instructions carefully – 2 doses 10 days apart are usually required. You should see an improvement 24-48 hours after application as the Mites start to die off. Guineaas often get fungal and parasitic problems at the same time. If this is the case, the fungal problem can be treated with the CocoNeem Melt, removed with the Manuka & Neem Shampoo. If the problem is particularly bad, use the Kwench Lotion two or three times a day and you should see an improvement within a week. You MUST leave at least 48 hours in between using Ivermectin and bathing your guineas so that you don't overload their little bodies. Guineaas often get fungal and parasitic problems at the same time, so if in doubt, have them treated for both.



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Top 5 Tips To Keep Your Guinea's Skin In Good Condition

1. Bedding

The kind of bedding that you choose for your guineas can affect their skin. Wood shavings / sawdust are not recommended, especially any that are scented (usually Lavender, Lemongrass or Citronella). Whilst shavings are great for absorbing urine, they can also absorb the natural oils from your guinea's skin, leaving them more prone to skin problems. Dust / oils in the wood can also lead to respiratory disease that can be fatal.

So what else can you use? Several horse beddings are suitable including Flax (brand names include Equisorb, Jopack, Hippofan), Dengie MediBed (short-chopped straw). Please ensure that any bedding you use does NOT contain any Essential Oils as they are not suitable for guinea pigs.

From pet shops you can get Russel Bedding (short-chopped straw) or Bed O'Linum (Flax bedding). Please DO NOT use straw designed for rabbits (long, thick strands – usually barley straw) as this can cause eye poke injuries to guineas. Hay can also be used as bedding but doesn't absorb urine as well as the other beddings. All bedding needs to be used over a thick layer of newspaper to make it easy to roll up and remove for cleaning and composting.

2. Cleaning

Cages need to be cleaned and thoroughly disinfected at least twice a week, especially when it is very hot or very cold. Damp bedding should be removed and replaced once or twice a day - depending on the number of guineas in the cage. When the weather is hot, bacteria, fungi and viruses can grow very fast, and in cold weather, damp bedding can freeze.

Recommended disinfectants include Conficlean 2 (our personal favourite), Virkon S (available online from www.thehayexperts.co.uk), Formula H and F10. All of these products are far more effective than the usual "pet shop sprays" and work against a wide variety of bacteria, fungi and viruses.

3. Environment

If your guinea is kept outside in a cage during the winter without any protection from the cold (not recommended), damp bedding can freeze. We recommend that as a minimum, guineas are kept in a shed / outbuilding and protected from the elements. Keeping them indoors or in a heated shed is even better. Guinea pigs are originally from Peru where the climate is warm and dry. Here in the UK they can suffer from skin / respiratory problems in particular, mainly due to the climate which is always humid.

4. Inspection

Regular inspection of your guinea's hair, skin, ears, nose, mouth, and an awareness of what "normal" scratching is will help you to catch any skin problems sooner rather than later. Look for any signs of redness, dry / flaky skin, hair coming out in clumps with dead skin on the end, cuts, bites, open sores etc. If you find anything suspicious, take action straight away – skin problems can kill guineas if left untreated.

5. Shampooing

We recommend that you shampoo your guineas every 4 - 6 weeks with one of the range of Gorgeous Guinea shampoos. Guinea that are bathed regularly are less likely to get skin problems in the first place. Unless your guinea has a skin problem, they do not need shampooing more often. Too much shampooing can cause their skin to become dry and irritated. Always remember to put your clean guinea back into a clean cage!

Check out our range of shampoos for guineas of all ages, all hair types, and for common skin problems such as Lice and fungal infections and start shampooing!



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At Gorgeous Guineaes We Believe In...

1. Guinea pigs having their own range of skincare products. Why use products designed for human conditions with human doses of ingredients that may not be appropriate for guineas?
2. Providing simple skincare solutions. We make effective products designed for the specific types of skin problems that guinea pigs have.
3. Testing all our products on willing Human volunteers before using them on guinea pigs, rather than the other way around!
4. Using good quality ingredients in our handmade products and pricing them sensibly. We don't "do" cheap and cheerful just to cut costs and churn out £1.99 bottles of shampoo.
5. Creating our own unique range of products using gentle, but effective ingredients. These include vegetable oils, herbal oils and Essential Oils at appropriate levels for guinea pigs.
6. Using the minimum number of ingredients to get the job done. Each product ingredient has a purpose and has been carefully chosen for the properties it has.
7. Avoiding SLS / SLES (harsh detergents), Parabens, artificial colours, artificial fragrances, Palm Oil and Mineral Oil.
8. Making products by hand and with loving care. Small batches ensure freshness and maximum shelf life.
9. Doing our bit for the environment. We keep packaging to a minimum and use bottles that can be recycled as well as buying recycled paper and envelopes.
10. Working with guinea pig rescues and customers for inspiration to help us with product development. Many of our products have been designed as a result of requests for "something that will do x, y, and z – oh and by the way, the sow is pregnant!"

In 2003 we started out with just 3 products. Since then we have expanded our range to include products for pregnant sows, foot problems as well as general pampering. Our Shampoos, Melts, Lotions, Creams, Gels and Ointments provide solutions to a whole range of skin problems including lice, dandruff / scurfy skin, Ringworm, Bumblefoot / sore, cracked feet, crusty nipples, crusty noses and mouth areas, and anything else we've missed! Trial sizes of most products are available so that you can take them for a test-drive before buying larger sizes.

Although our products have been designed specifically for the needs of guinea pigs, they have also been used successfully on many other types of "small furrries" including hamsters, mice, rats, rabbits and chinchillas. Many dogs with irritated skin have also been helped by our Manuka & Neem Shampoo and Neem Soothe Gel.



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About Gorgeous Guineaes

Gorgeous Guineaes was started in 2003 by me (Chrissie Slade). My twin passions in life are guinea pigs and Aromatherapy. With qualifications in both Human and Animal Aromatics, I love using this knowledge to make products for specific skincare problems. No Animal Testing here...all the products are test-driven by Humans before being used on animals:).

When Karen at Reading Guinea Pig Rescue took in 17 guineas with bad fungal skin problems, I decided to try and help them with some nice gentle Aromatherapy products, rather than continuing to use the traditional harsh dips and shampoos stuffed full of chemicals that weren't working too well. All the guineas concerned made full recoveries from their skin problems, and the rest, as they say, is history.



Chrissie & Chiara

Over the past 8 years our range has expanded greatly after starting with just 3 products. Many of the requests we've had for new products have come from our customers or from the guinea pig rescues that we work with.

Our mission in life is to educate humans about the importance of guinea pig skincare and pampering, and to help every guinea to become Gorgeous with nice clean, healthy skin and the soft, shiny hair that they deserve.

We're proud of our products which are the world's first and (so far) only range of Aromatherapy products designed especially for guinea pigs. Over the past 8 years we've helped many thousands of guineas to become gorgeous again after they have suffered some of the most horrible skin problems imaginable. We now have happy "little customers" all over the world:)

Thanks go to our dedicated band of product testers who run guinea pig rescues in the UK. Gorgeous Guineaes products would not exist without their help and feedback, as well as suggestions from our customers.

Please feel free to share this information with friends, guinea pig rescues and Vets or anyone else that you know with an interest in guinea pigs.

For more information and free advice:

- Visit our website: www.gorgeousguineas.com
- Check out our Blog: www.gorgeousguineas.com/blog
- Send us an email: info@gorgeousguineas.com
- Phone us for advice: **0845 838 7458** (leave a message with our answering service so we can call you back)