

How to Have a Healthy Relationship with your Pet

What do you do when your pregnant rat is about to have babies? When your tarantula is about to shed its exoskeleton? When guinea pigs are squealing at you? You don't have to be a psychic to know what your pets need - you just have to really know your pets. The easiest way to do this is to spend some quality time with your animal friends. This has proven to have both psychological and emotional benefits for you and your pet, but it's also a good way to learn about your pet's habits and moods. Have you ever sensed that something was just not right, only to have your pet get sick soon after? Even if you can't diagnose a particular problem, just recognizing a change in behavior can be important. In fact, this is one of the first signs that your pet is about to undergo a major change. (For females, behavior changes can indicate impending birth, or for creatures that shed skins, it can signal a new cycle.) Illness and disease often changes your pet's normal cycles before he or she shows other symptoms, so it's a good indicator to recognize. Is your pet lazy when he or she usually wants to play? Is he or she refusing a treat? If you notice these things, you can start treatment early. One reason you may notice behavior changes before other symptoms is that many pets are recently domesticated, so they harbor that "wild" tendency to hide any signs of weakness, to protect themselves from predators in the wild. This is particularly true of birds and lizards, who can sometimes hide symptoms so long that the illness is difficult to treat successfully by the time you finally catch it. But if you know your pets, you can avoid these problems. So how can you see when your rat is about to give birth? Watch her behavior and her cagemates' behavior - and give her some privacy! If you notice that your tarantula's eating habits are changing and that it's time for a molting cycle, increase the humidity to ease the shedding process. And those guinea pigs? They might be used to getting a treat from you at a routine time every evening. Just give them what they expect and your ears will be saved. Remember, the best way to keep your pet - and yourself - healthy and happy is to spend time together. You'll both know each other all the better for it.

About the Author

Ian Spellfield, an occasionally frustrated pet owner, tests and reviews cat urine removal products at his blog [Urine Off Reviews](http://www.urineoffreviews.com). You can follow his reviews and occasional heartache at <http://www.urineoffreviews.com>

Source: <http://americanahost.com>