



## Parrot Care and Feeding

Parrots are omnivores; they require a varied (*and expensive!*) diet to keep them healthy. An all seed diet is **not** adequate for any parrot, including parakeets and cockatiels. A poor diet will cause the bird to be malnourished, and will ultimately manifest itself in health problems and early demise for the parrot. A good diet will include a high quality pelleted food, specifically made for parrots, as well as fresh vegetables and fruits. Many people who have companion parrots supplement this diet with appropriate treats – healthy nuts and seeds, etc.

Parrots should have the largest cage possible, and should be encouraged to move around in it actively. The bird should be able to stretch its wings wide in any direction without touching the top, sides or bottom of the cage. Round cages are NOT appropriate for parrots. The cage should be sturdy enough to withstand “beak abuse”, and metal cages should be stainless steel or powder coated, and should not contain zinc, lead or copper, as these are toxic to birds.

Parrots are flock animals by nature, and need lots of attention from their flockmate(s) (**YOU**) every day. They need exercise and mental stimulation because they are so intelligent. They need lots of appropriate toys, too, that they **WILL** destroy – it’s their job.

Parrots need routine veterinary care, just like dogs and cats. (Yes, this includes parakeets and cockatiels.) They should be examined at least **annually** by a qualified avian vet who **routinely sees birds** for more than just toenail and wing trims.

A healthy parrot can live a long time, with a lifespan of 15+ years for a parakeet, 30+ years for a cockatiel, and 80+ years possible for some of the bigger birds. It’s important to provide for your parrot in case something happens to you.