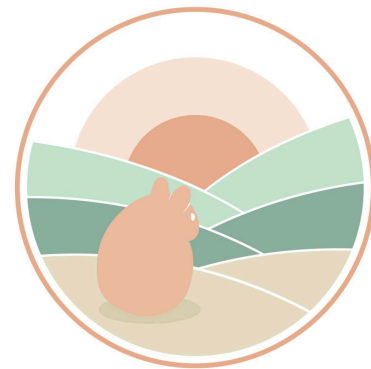


BRIGHT HORIZON HAMSTER RESCUE CARE ESSENTIALS: **ROBOROVSKI**



KEEPING ROBOS HYDRATED



My name is Richard - I am a Roborovskis Dwarf Hamster. And sometimes, I “forget” to drink water!

I can go for a long time without physically needing a drink - I'll drink it if it's there, but it isn't the first thing I'll think to do.

In captivity, there's a risk that I'll get severely dehydrated before my instincts kick in, or my body recognises it's water that I need. By then, sometimes I'm too weak and my human needs to help!

In nature, we get almost all of our water from the food we eat.

Where I'm from, the landscape is dry, hot and bare. There isn't much water: streams are dry a lot of the year, it hardly ever rains, and pools and puddles dry up.

Me and my species evolved to make really efficient use of water: every drop we get, our bodies preserve. We only pee out what we can spare, and we aren't evolved to look for water.

Our natural diet contains lots of succulent plants, that also evolved to survive the dry landscape by storing water. Their leaves hold a lot of water, and their seeds often contain their own water source.

We also eat insects, and use the water in their bodies too.

If we find water, we will drink it if we need it, but we don't build our homes near water sources intentionally, or need water to be nearby.



IN CAPTIVITY, OUR DIETS CAN BE DANGEROUSLY DIFFERENT

Our humans don't live in arid places, and the plants they eat are different to the plants we're evolved to eat. The seeds don't have their own water, the leaves aren't as juicy. The insects we're offered are already dried, so there's no water in them either.

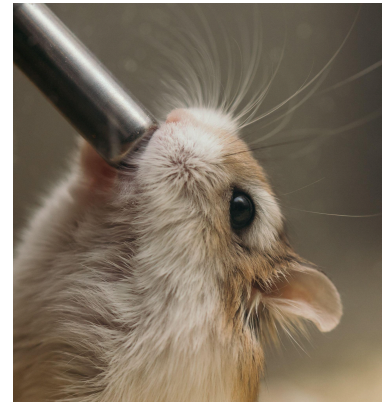
Our humans give us water in bowls and bottles, and we need this to be fresh and clean, so that we can make up for the water that's missing in our diet. We can forget it's there though as it's not natural behaviour, so giving us watery fruit or vegetables daily helps us to get enough water too.

DEHYDRATION CAN SEEM SUDDEN - AND WE NEED YOUR URGENT HELP IF WE GET TOO DEHYDRATED!

A DEHYDRATED ROBO CAN DETERIORATE QUICKLY - ACT FAST

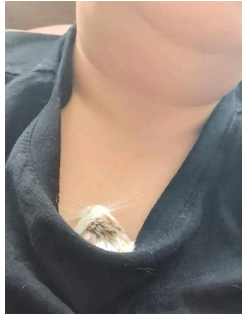
SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

- I'm lethargic, immobile, collapsed or barely moving
- My breathing is shallow, rapid or laboured
- I feel colder to the touch than usual
- I struggle to stay awake or conscious



HELP ME QUICKLY!

- **Immediately offer water with a syringe**
- a SOURCE OF SUGAR in the water is ideal (diluted fruit juice - not citrus)
- Keep me warm, safe and snuggled while my body comes round
- I bounce back within an hour - don't put me down somewhere unsafe!
- Offer me fruit and watery veg for the next few days, and extra food
- Offer me 2+ water sources in my enclosure from now on



If I was dehydrated, I'll recover very quickly and whilst I might be a little bit dazed and confused for a while, I'll be back to my normal self within an hour.

If these steps don't revive me, please take me to an exotics vet urgently! Something else is wrong.



I'm not dehydrated in this picture - I just love snoozing in my wheel!

We like lazing around, so it can be hard to spot the difference.

If I'm critically dehydrated, I won't run off if you touch me unexpectedly.

You can't harm me by offering me water if you're ever in doubt though.