

## Dust Baths for Chinchillas

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

There are few things as soft as a chinchilla's fur. To keep that fur in its best condition, your chinchilla needs to have regular access to a dust bath. The dust helps absorb excess oils and moisture, keeps the fine fur from matting and the bath is an enjoyable experience for your pet.

For a dust bath, provide a dish that contains the special bathing dust. Special covered dishes are available which keep the fine dust in the dish and not all over the house! The dish should be heavy enough that the chinchilla will not be able to tip it over. Be sure to use a commercial dust that is specifically made for chinchillas, and provide a minimum depth of 1 inch. Allow your chinchilla to have access to the bath for about 10 minutes. You should provide the bath at least twice weekly, although daily dust bathing is fine as long as it does not dry out the skin. The more humid the climate, the more often the dust bath should be provided. The dust can be re-used, but if it starts to clump or look dirty, replace it.

Gerbils and degus should also have access to a dust bath.

