



Archie's Exotic Pet Rescue

www.archiesrescue.ca

Helping Your Bunny Deal With Grief



Our rabbits make such a huge impression in our lives and in our hearts, that time with them often just melts away. Eventually, though, we have to say goodbye. Sometimes we expect it; other times, it comes seemingly from out of nowhere. Grief grips us all in different ways. We need time to deal with loss in our own way. If your rabbit leaves behind a bonded mate, he, too, will grieve. Now more than ever, your surviving rabbit will need you to help him through his grief. Rabbit grief is very real.

Just like people, rabbits grieve in their own way. Here are a few ways you can help your rabbit deal with the loss of his mate.

1. Let Him Say Goodbye

Allow your rabbit the opportunity, if possible, to say goodbye to his mate by giving him time alone with the deceased rabbit's body. Many times the surviving rabbit will sniff, nudge, groom, and even hop on their mate. Eventually, though, he will begin to realize his friend is gone.

A rabbit who doesn't get to see his mate's body will likely have a difficult time understanding where his friend went. He may wander around your home aimlessly searching for his missing friend and he may never stop looking. That could lead to a deep depression and even death.

2. Keep A Close Eye On Him

All rabbits have their own way of dealing with grief. Some may respond to their mate's death by sinking into depression, refusing to eat, and generally becoming lethargic. Others may display anger in general or that's directed at you. However your rabbit grieves, make sure he is still eating and drinking. A loss of appetite could lead to illness. Shower your surviving rabbit with attention and love. Again, all rabbits react differently, so your rabbit may lap up the attention, bonding to you.

3. Give Him A Stuffed Animal

Some pet parents find that giving their surviving rabbit a stuffed animal helps them deal with rabbit grief. The survivor may cuddle up to and groom the stuffed animal, helping him to feel less alone without his mate. You might also want to give your rabbit new toys to help stimulate him and distract him from his loss.

4. Book To Bond A New Mate

Only you really know when the right time is, if ever, to adopt a new mate for your rabbit. You may not be ready for another rabbit, but it may be the only way to bring your rabbit out of depression. Let him choose his new mate. Make an appointment at your local animal shelter or rescue for your rabbit to go on a few dates so he can find the best match.

Both you and your rabbit may grieve your loss in different ways. However, you can ensure your surviving rabbit's continued good health and happiness by taking the above steps and, at the same time, he just may help you in the healing process.

Taken from the Small Pet Select website

