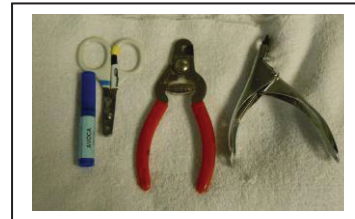


Grooming rabbit patients

Dematt & Bath;

1. Equipment; **1 or 2 Table(s)** (not advised to do this on the floor as the rabbit is more stimulated to escape!), another **helper/handler**, room **heater** or possibly an incubator to ensure the rabbit is thoroughly dry as quick as possible, **Thermometer** (assess before and after treatment), **warm water in two litter trays** (or similar), 2-3 **towels**, **hairdryer**, **swabs**, pet **shampoo** (such as Episoothe[®], or Pet Head), **Brush/comb/scissors/clippers** for grooming out mats, protective clothing (gloves, apron, mask), **topical treatments** e.g. Sudocrem.



2. Check the temperature prior to making the rabbit wet. The worst mats should be removed where possible before the hair wet. Great care should be taken in closely adhered mats to the skin to avoid ripping or cutting the delicate rabbit skin especially if it has become inflamed / infected underneath.

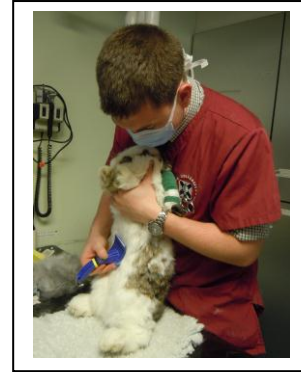


3. Gently hold the rabbit upright (supporting pectoral and pelvis girdle) and lower the hind feet and bottom into the warm water *the rabbit may panic at this point especially if it has sore skin e.g. pododermatitis*. Once the hair is thoroughly soaked apply a small amount of shampoo (this is not required in mildly soiled rabbits), working it into the most soiled areas while still sitting in the water.

4. Use the first tray of water to gently rinse off most of the shampoo using swabs or soft cloths.

5. Transfer rabbit to sit on a towel in a natural position for a minute to give it a break.

6. Resume up-right position again (supporting the back) and place gently into second tray of warm water using fresh swabs or cloth to rinse out the final shampoo. *A second tray of warm water may be required*. Before transferring to a fresh towel gently rinse/squeeze excess water from the fur, tail and hind feet.



7. Transfer to a fresh towel and start drying the fur gently and then start with the hairdryer (stop if the rabbit becomes too stressed). When using the hairdryer the handler MUST always keep their hand on the rabbit in the air-flow and the dryer moved constantly to avoid discomfort or burns.

8. The temperature should be checked and the rabbit either placed in an incubator briefly or in a warm room to prevent hypothermia.

Clip claws;

The rabbit should be restrained by keeping all feet planted on the work surface (table) and positioned lengthways to the handler's position (e.g. rabbit's head facing to the handlers left or right). Front and hind claws should be clipped along left or right side first, and then the rabbit turned to face the other way to do the other side. This allows control of the rabbit's movements and quick support to it's back if it panics. It also reduces stress levels and the need of a second handler as would be required if held upright. The nail should be cut just in front of where the quick is observed (black nails are a bit of guessing game) and if the quick is cut causing bleeding then a silver nitrate pencil can be used to stop the bleeding. However, both cutting the quick and apply the silver nitrate are painful and should be avoided where possible.



Normal nail length

Abnormal nail length (*Indicates quick location)