

Satin Syndrome Checklist

If you're concerned your guinea pig may be a satin, print this checklist and bring it to an exotics vet.

Skeletal & Mobility Issues

- ☐ Difficulty walking or limping
- ☐ Stiff, awkward, or "robotic" gait
- ☐ Reluctance to move or climb
- ☐ Sudden weakness or collapse in back legs
- ☐ Visible or palpable bone deformities (especially spine, legs, jaw)
- ☐ Reduced ability to grip or use front paws
- ☐ Poor balance or frequent stumbling
- ☐ Hopping like a bunny

Pain & Discomfort

- ☐ Vocalizing when handled
- ☐ Flinching or pulling away from touch
- ☐ Teeth grinding (a sign of chronic pain)
- ☐ Unusual posture (e.g., hunched, stiff)
- ☐ Snapping or trying to bite
- ☐ Apparent distress when moving or trying to eat

Dental & Jaw Changes

- ☐ Overgrown teeth or uneven wear
- ☐ Difficulty chewing or dropping food
- ☐ Excessive drooling or wet chin
- ☐ Weight loss due to reduced food intake
- ☐ Swelling around the jaw or face
- ☐ Will pee or put mouthfuls of water in pellets to soften
- ☐ Will carry pellets around and it looks like their bowl is empty, but cage may be dirtier
- ☐ Will bite the pellet in half and drop it, leaving small pieces around

Metabolic/Other Physical Signs

- ☐ Soft or brittle bones on X-ray - bone is wearing away or eroding due to lack of calcium
- ☐ Reduced bone density
- ☐ Muscle wasting (especially along the spine or limbs)
- ☐ Enlarged joints
- ☐ Abnormal blood calcium/phosphorus levels (if tested)

Coat & General Health Clues (not diagnostic alone)

- ☐ Satin-like, glassy, or overly shiny fur - almost holographic, glittery in bright light*
- ☐ Hollow shaft under a microscope
- ☐ Lethargy or reduced energy
- ☐ Poor grooming or messy coat
- ☐ Unexplained weight loss
- ☐ Chronic health decline with no clear cause

*If you have a satin teddy, it can be very difficult to tell with their fur, so err on the side of caution.

