

Squirrel Weaning

Weaning takes several weeks. Start when eyes open at 28-35 days (~4 weeks of age). Put a rodent block in with babies at that age to get them used to the smell, you may find them sucking on it and eventually you'll find crumbs showing they are working on it. Change the block once a day. Most squirrels can be weaned by about 8 weeks. To aid in weaning, rodent blocks - such as Purina Rat Chow, or Hagen Nutri Blocks (made for rats and mice) can be soaked, blenderized, strained through a tea strainer and then added to the formula starting when the squirrels open their eyes. Weaning foods can be varied, but the rodent blocks should make up 80% of the diet once the squirrels are weaned, because they need this 100% nutrition to develop healthy bones and organs. They will choose to eat the *treats* you give them before the rodent blocks, so treats have to be limited. Do not give whole unpeeled grapes too early, these are choke hazards for smaller babies.

Appropriate foods:

Mazuri rodent chow or 'Monkey Chow' (ZuPreem Primate Diet)
yellow squash, broccoli stems, carrots, fruit tree leaves, dry, cooked beef bone (always have one in the cage as a source of calcium)

*1 day per wk. foods

avocado, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, cauliflower, dandelion leaves, plums, yams, raspberries, rutabagas, strawberries, tangerines/oranges, watercress, lettuce-romaine, endive, parsley, watermelon, corn, peaches, seeds, nuts (avoid peanuts, use native nuts when possible)

Squirrel "weaning" cookies

Base recipe

1 tsp peanut butter (best choice is no salt/no sugar)

1 cup crushed rodent blocks

water

optional ingredients

1 tsp wheatgerm

rolled oats

crushed walnuts

cracked corn

Mix together, using water as need to form cookie dough consistency, roll in little balls and refrigerate.