



CJC EXOTICS

Educators, caretakers passionate
about reptiles and amphibians

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CALIFORNIA KINGSNAKE CARE SHEET / HATCHLING

Diet- as recent hatchlings, baby kingsnakes normally eat once a week. This is a good rule of thumb for their entire life. As hatchlings, they are on a diet of frozen/thawed pinky mice. Food supply can be found at local breeders and at retailers online. We suggest buying in bulk to reduce cost. It is strongly recommended that you stick to a diet of mice over rats for kingsnakes as they grow. They are generally eager eaters, and will eat several times a week if offered. It's easy to over-feed them so take heed to keep to their feeding schedule. Colubrids like kingsnakes can become prone to fatty liver disease if they are fed more than they need over a period of time. This is deadly in kingsnakes. An occasional addition to their diet, i.e. properly sized rat or even a chick or small egg, is completely fine for them. "Occasional" is the key word. They will never complain if you only ever feed them mice.

Food Size/feeding- as your baby kingsnake begins to grow, so will their diet. You should be feeding your kingsnake on a weekly schedule with a food item that is not larger than the biggest part of your snake's midsection in circumference. While they are capable of taking larger prey, it will increase the possibility of regurgitation. Kingsnakes are very food motivated. This means that they will likely think food is involved each time you open their enclosure. This is a great reason to stick to a regimented schedule.

Water- kingsnakes have been known to soak in their water bowl. If your enclosure allows, provide a water dish or bowl large enough for your kingsnake to soak in. It is VERY IMPORTANT that your snake has access to clean water every day so keep it clean.

Enclosure- your new pet's enclosure should allow them enough space to move around and grow without being too large or overwhelming. Kingsnakes are curious, and unlike other snakes that are sedentary, the kingsnake is fairly active. As a diurnal animal they will do most of their moving around during the day. Consider using aspen wood chips, coconut chips or even a bioactive substrate for your animal. Make sure they have enough substrate to burrow. Kingsnakes explore but they also appreciate a place to hide and burrowing is one way they do this. In addition, a hide log or cave or a similar item will help them feel secure and reduce stress. Pieces of wood, rocks, etc. can be added to create a natural environment. NOTE! Kingsnakes are very good escape artists. Your enclosure will need to have a locking lid or door, or if you are using a plastic bin, be sure the lid is a locking type.

Husbandry- in the wild, the California kingsnake comes from a varied climate. They will brumate (hibernate) in the wild in temperatures in the low 50's. In the summer, it's not unusual for them to tolerate temperatures close to 100 degrees. They are very resilient and forgiving compared to a lot of other reptiles. The best scenario is to ensure a steady gradient of 70-75 degrees on the cool side of the enclosure and a basking spot of 85-90 degrees at the side where your snake's hide is located. Place a heat pad on the bottom on the hide side (underneath the enclosure) with a thermostat. There are many thermostats available online. We can offer suggestions for you. Humidity should remain between 50-60%



for kingsnakes. You can find inexpensive hygrometers at your local pet store that will show the constant humidity measurement in your enclosure.

Shedding- as your kingsnake grows, it will molt, or shed its skin throughout its life. A hatchling up to its first year of life may shed as frequently as once a month. You will see an opaque color on their skin and especially on their eyes. It is perfectly okay to spray a little water in their enclosure and on the animal during this period. If you notice some pieces of stuck skin after they shed, this is a sure sign that the humidity should be checked. On a good note, it is uncommon for kingsnakes to have issues when shedding.

With regular handling, a clean and healthy enclosure, and a consistent diet, your kingsnake will be a great pet and addition to your family for a long time.

DISCLAIMERS:

- If you have questions about ANYTHING, we implore new and experienced owners to reach out to us! Your new pet is an animal we produced and we respect their lives as much as you. Our commitment to their well-being doesn't end after you take them home. Don't be afraid to ask us for help with anything, even if you think you made a mistake or you don't know what to do. There are no stupid questions. Contact info is shown below. We don't pass judgement but we will do our best to help you through any concerns.
- Exotic pets like snakes are a long term commitment. We have animals that will live over 30 years! If you find yourself in a place or a situation where you can no longer care for your pet, for ANY reason, we ask that you please, please contact us first. We rescue reptiles of all kinds and we'd especially want to care for an animal that originated with us. Please don't feel as if you've failed if you find that this is not the pet for you. We will gladly come to you and give your pet a home with us, and continue to care for that animal for the remainder of its life.

GENERAL QUESTIONS: Email cjexotics@gmail.com We will respond within 24 hours.

MEDICAL/HEALTH OR SURRENDER URGENCY: Text 603.333.7406 and 978.987.1361
We will respond in minutes and do our best to assist.