Taking Care of Your New Baby

To make the adjustment easier for your little guy (and you), please try and use these simple tips for the next two weeks or so until he is fully adapted to his new surroundings. Remember that your bird is a ***baby*** and must learn many new things.

Water - Provide both a glass tube or ball waterer (for rodents) **AND** a small dish on the bottom of the cage. After you see him drinking from the tube regularly, you can remove the small dish.

Food - Your bird should be fed chopped fruits, vegetables and greens, seeds (small hook bill or cockatiel mix), pellets (for cockatiels), rice, pasta, bread and millet spray. If you change the diet, **do it gradually!!** The bird may have not learned to associate different foods so be careful. Young parrotlets have been known to starve to death because their diet was switched overnight and they did not eat the new food. For the first week or so, place your bird's food on the bottom of the cage in a paper plate or on a paper towel. Provide seed and/or pellets in small, flat dishes on the bottom. Also, be sure to give them as much millet as they want especially the first week. Then, you can gradually reduce the amount to a spray a couple of times a week. After he is seen eating out of the dishes regularly, you can move the rest of his food to small, flat dishes and then to the regular dishes provided with the cage. Avoid dishes with hoods on them; many parrotlets will not stick their heads inside and can starve to death.

Toys and Playpens - Parrotlets love to play and should be given a lot of toys. Things that move such as swings and hanging toys are favorites. They also like things made from natural materials such as wood, leather and raw hide. Small items such as beads and bells are especially relished and played with for hours on end. Parrotlets can be taught to stay on playpens and baskets. This will allow your pet more freedom as well as more time with you as he is more mobile and easy to move around.

Stress - Remember your bird is a baby and he needs rest. When you first bring him home, put him in his cage and let him get used to the new environment. If the bird was shipped or had to travel a distance from the breeder, leave him in the cage the first day. On the second day, you can open the door and take him out for playtime. After about an hour, return him to his cage. He can then come out a few more times during the day. Do not continually play with him for hour after hour while he is very young. As he gets older, gradually his out of cage time can increase.
Your baby is used to cuddling up against his siblings at night. Make sure his cage is placed in a warm area and cover him at night. Do not expose him to drafts. If your baby appears lethargic, quiet, weak, cold or is unable to perch, immediately place the bird's cage on a heating pad or under a light covered with a towel. Try and warm him up to 85°-88° and get him to an **avian** veterinarian.

Many times heat will work wonders and in a few hours they are up and running around. Sometimes, the stress of the new home, etcetera, can be a little much.