



Hedgehog Care Sheet

Housing: A plastic Tote, aquarium, or a plastic children's pool can be used to house your pet. A light weight food dish and a water bottle attached to the side of the cage should be provided. Hogs like to hide in burrows therefore a den is needed. A section of 4"- 6"diameter PVC (plastic) plumbing pipe or plastic coffee can works well as a den or hide place. You can get this at almost any hardware, Big Box store or plumbing store. Some hogs will use a shallow litter box or pan. Bedding should consist of aspen shavings, pine chips or Carefresh. Do not use cedar, contain aromatic oils that cause irritation to the eyes, mucous membranes and respiratory tract. An exercise wheel is also recommended. It should have a large solid cylinder so that the hogs feet don't get caught. Hedgehogs tend to be surprisingly energetic, and need the chance to use up some of this energy.

Diet: Hedgehogs are insectivores, and as a result are essentially carnivorous like cats, as opposed to guinea pigs, rabbits, and most small rodents, which are generally vegetarian. High quality Hedgehog food (such as Spikes Delight www.pet-pro.com), hedgehog maintenance diet (multiple sources) be provided. They also eat crickets, pinkie mice, and mealworms. Small amounts of beta-carotene rich veggies should also be provided.

Handling your Hedgehog: You may be lucky enough to acquire a very friendly outgoing baby who accepts you almost instantly. Not all-new hedgehogs are so adaptable. Getting your hedgehog to become familiar with you will take patience. Spend more time holding him/her. He/she will get used to you and begin to relax. Hedgehogs have poor eyesight. They use smell as their primary sense. Your hedgie will learn to identify you by smell. The best way to do this is to spend time with your pet several times a day just gently holding it to allow it to adjust to you and learn to recognize your scent. Picking up a hedgehog, or otherwise handling him is difficult, at least until he gets to know your smell. Never wear gloves when handling your pet. This blocks your scent and confuses your pet. The best way to pick up a hedgehog is with one hand at each side of him, then bring your hands gently together to cup him. Never grasp a hedgehog in a way that could allow any of your fingers to be caught in the middle should he decides to roll into a ball. As your hedgehog adjusts to being held, it will come to you with his quills lying flat, allowing you to play with, and pet him. You can also carry your hedgehog with in in a carry pouch made of breathable material.

Behavior: If a hedgehog smells something interesting, it will often begin to contort itself, start foaming at the mouth and lick the foam onto its spines. This behavior is referred to

as self-anointing. The snuffling or snorting while having the head tucked down is a defense mechanism. It leaves them with their quills protecting every bit of visible surface, but still allows the hedgehog to move. This behavior is usually accompanied by sudden lurches in the direction the hedgehog believes its potential enemy is in, to try and give it a good warning prickle. The more your hedgehog comes to know you, the less defensive it will become.

Hibernation: A common concern is whether or not pet hedgehogs hibernate – especially as winter starts to arrive. The answer is generally no. However, if the temperature where they are kept drops too low (below 68 degrees F), they can start preparing for hibernation. If the temperature drops much below this the hog may hibernate for brief periods. If the hedgehog doesn't respond to stimulation then it needs to be warmed up. Another sign of a hedgehog that is too cool is going off its food. A chilled hedgehog will walk as if it is drunk. If your hedgehog isn't eating, and is walking a bit funny, it may be because he is too cool. These signs may also indicate serious illness. If these signs do not resolve when your hog is warmed up by placing a under the tank heater under the cage, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Breeding: Hedgehogs can mate when they are only 6 weeks old. If you do have young hogs, remember to separate them before this age if you do not want them to breed. If you do want to breed, we will be happy to answer questions on the subject
Thank you for taking home one of our hog babies. If you have any question please feel free to email me at nikki.8671@gmail.com.

www.ccsexoticpets.com