



Hedgehog Care Sheet

Housing: A plastic tote can be used to house your pet to allow for proper housing and temperature control (we recommend 105 quart or larger). A light weight food dish (provided by CC's) and a water bottle (without a spring loaded ball) attached to the outside of the cage going through the wall of the tote, should be provided. Hogs like to hide in burrows therefore a den/hide is needed. A section of 4"- 6"diameter PVC (plastic) plumbing pipe or plastic hide works well as a den or hide place. Some hogs will use a shallow litter box or pan. Bedding and litter should consist of fleece material, aspen shavings or pine chips. Do not use cedar or other scented products, it contains aromatic oils that cause irritation to the eyes, mucous membranes and respiratory tract or digestive issues. An exercise wheel is also recommended. It should have a large solid cylinder so that the hogs feet don't get caught and bearings to keep the wheel quite. Hedgehogs tend to be surprisingly energetic, and need the chance to use up some of this energy as they are nocturnal, they will play most of the night.

Diet: Hedgehogs are insectivores, and as a result a High quality Hedgehog food (such as **Spikes Delight from www.pet-pro.com**) should be fed, hedgehog maintenance diet. Contact CC's for proper amounts of food to feed. Feeding schedules will vary and no set time is needed to feed them other than only once a day. They also eat crickets and mealworms (freeze dried is preferred) at a rate of two/three at a time, just a couple times a week. Small amounts of beta-carotene rich veggies can be offered.

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. You can also use a fleece hedgehog pouch with a long neck strap to keep your hedgehog with you, to allow them to get use to your scent, sounds of the house and movements. Picking up a hedgehog, or otherwise handling him is difficult at first but with practice it gets easy, at least until he gets to know your smell/scent. 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 normally using bedding to help you adjust to the pets quills. 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, interact and pet him. You can also carry your hedgehog in a carry pouch made of breathable material.

Behavior: If a hedgehog smells something interesting, it will often begin to lick and bite at the smell/scent and then contort itself, start foaming at the mouth and lick the foam onto its spines. This behavior is referred to as self-anointing. This is used to hide the pet in the wild from other predators by masking the hedgehogs own smell to match the environments smell.

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.

Dry skin can cause itching for hedgehogs and can be cared for by applying 3 to 4 drops of vitamin E oil down their spine to take care of the symptoms of itching like a dog scratches. Only apply vitamin E oil only when the issue is seen and not on a routine as a buildup of oil is an issue to deal with.

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 is kept drops too low (below 68 degrees F) they can start to catch a cold and develop upper respiratory issues. We recommend an under tank heater to be left on under the tote all time to eliminate chances of getting cold. 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. Please locate a veterinarian in your area that is qualified to see exotic pets and have the number available if questions ever come up.

Breeding: Hedgehogs can mate when they are only 12 weeks old. If you do have young hogs, remember to separate them before this age if you do not want them to breed. Hedgehogs are a solitary animals and friends are not good or needed. If you do want to breed, we will be happy to answer questions on the subject.

Thank you. If you have any question please feel free to contact us at nikki.8671@gmail.com or visit our web site at www.ccsexoticpets.com