

Congrats on the purchase of your new baby hedgehog from Virginia Beach Hedgies!

The first thing you will need is a habitat for your new pet. For hedgehogs, give them as much room as you can, the more space the better. We recommend an absolute minimum of 2.5 to 3 square feet of floor space for your new pet. Your hedgehog will need a lot of room to exercise each night! We use C&C Cages, but guinea pig or rabbit cages can also make a good choice for your new hedgehog. Make sure the walls are high enough so that your new pet can't climb out. Remove feces and clean urine daily! All bedding should be removed and cage sanitized at least once per week.



Your hedgehog will need an exercise wheel to run on (THIS IS A MUST HAVE). We use 12" bucket wheels-wheels. Try to avoid mesh or wire wheels, or any other type of wheel that your hedgehog might get their feet or toenails stuck in (these can cause serious injuries). Your pet will also need a food dish, a water bottle, and an igloo to sleep in. Hedgehogs are shy but inquisitive creatures and like checking out new things, so alternating things in their cage like rocks to climb on, pieces of wood to climb under and push around or even tunnels made of PVC pipe to run through or hide in. These are all good choices to help keep your hedgehog active, happy and healthy. We even have play pens with toys and interesting objects for the hedgies to play with.



Bedding will be your next concern; you will need some sort of bedding to line your pet's cage. KAYTEE Clean and Cozy is our favorite, with Carefresh coming in second. We try to stay far away from wood shavings because they are known to house mites. NEVER USE CEDAR as the aromatic oils have been known to cause respiratory problems, that over time can become fatal.



You will need to develop a relationship with your new hedgehog. Devoting as much time as possible is essential and helps to create a trusting bond. Hedgehogs by nature are shy and timid creatures, so you will need to interact with your new pet on a daily basis. Setting play time aside each day will help your hedgehog become a custom to you and his/her new surroundings. With young hedgehogs (just weaned) at 6 weeks of age, they will start their quilling process which lasts until about 3 months of age. Interaction with your hedgehog during this time, we think is the most important.



Hedgehog nutrition is a much debated subject- there are only a few things that most breeders agree on: 1) Hedgehogs require a diet fairly low in fat, and some-what high in protein and 2) Baby hedgehogs (up to 6 months of age) require more fat in their diet because their growing bodies burn more calories. We feed our baby hedgies Purina One Kitten, and our adults Purina One Indoor. We also like to give lots of healthy snacks like boiled chicken, baby food, Gerber meat sticks, mild flavored veggies, and of-course MEAL WORMS.



Taking your hedgehog to the vet for a healthy pet check within the first week or two of arriving home is a good idea no matter who you get your hedgehog from. Hedgehog health care is pretty straight forward: they don't need any immunizations, and should only see a vet if they are showing signs of an illness/disease. Although they are prone to fatty liver disease, cancer and obesity, with the proper diet and exercise they can live a long and happy life. Hedgehogs are susceptible to bacteria which in most cases they obtain it through either their water source, unsanitary cages, treats or snack food left too long in their cages- so cleanliness is a must!



Hedgehogs need to be warm. We recommend temperatures between 70-75 degrees-any colder and they will hibernate which is fatal 90% of the time. We do not recommend heat lamps of any kind as this can cause blindness. If additional heat is needed use a heating pad under the outside of the cage.



Your pet's hygiene is also very important. When bathing your hedgehogs, we recommend using baby shampoo or an oatmeal based puppy/kitten shampoo, and a moisturizer such as cocoa or shea butter to soothe your hedgehogs itchy skin. We use a soft bristle toothbrush to wash their quills. This is also a good time to clip their toenails.

Nail cross section

