

Spaying and Neutering

Every pet pig should be spayed or neutered

Male pigs are fertile as early as 2 months old. Intact male pigs do not make good pets, they tend to "hump" everything. Their mouths will foam constantly and they often "mark their territory" with a pungent smelling fluid. Intact females often get "PMS" and may forget their potty training while they are in heat. Generally females go into heat every three weeks. Also, intact female pigs have a very high incidence of life-threatening uterine tumors and infections when older and larger, and no longer safe surgical candidates. Besides, we don't need any more babies in the world, due to the fact that there are already many homeless pigs because of over-breeding and people unable to keep their pigs for various reasons. Anesthesia needs to be used when spaying and neutering.

Eyes and Ears

Some pigs are prone to eye problems, so check your pigs eyes for irritation or stuck eyelashes, or eyelashes that may curve into the eye and cause irritation (this is called "entropion" - a condition that should be corrected by surgery done by your vet). Some pigs have naturally weepy eyes that produce sticky, brownish tears. Wipe away the goo with a soft, warm, damp cloth or baby wipes. You can also use a little Vaseline around the eye to keep the brownish tears from caking on the pigs face, it will also help to soften any brownish gook already caked there for easy removal.

Pigs sometimes get a brown waxy build up inside their ears - this is normal and should be cleaned out. Wipe the outside part of the ear gently with a soft cloth. Stay away from the ear canal and inner ear. DO NOT try to clean deep inside the ear. Do not flush the pigs ears out, liquid in the ear can cause deafness and balance problems. A damp paper towel, not stuffed deep into the canal and still sticking out of the ear, left in the pig's ear for a little while will soften the build-up making the build-up easier to remove. Deep-cleaning, if needed, is best left for your vet.

Hoof Trimming

Pigs that have access to concrete and are able to walk on concrete daily, generally do not need hoof trimming as often as pigs who almost always walk in dirt, grass or carpet, because walking on concrete will wear down their hooves naturally. Otherwise their hooves should be trimmed about every 9-12 months. Hoof-trimming is best done by your vet or someone experienced doing this. If the hooves get so long that they curl up on the ends or if the dewclaws touch the ground, it hurts the pig to walk. They can also develop serious leg problems. Long hooves shift the weight back and break down the hoof and ankle structure.

Anesthesia generally is not necessary for routine hoof trimming. It is safer not to use anesthesia unless the pig absolutely needs it due to his/her stress level. The most common way a pig's hooves are trimmed is that the pig is flipped over on it's back. Others prefer to trim the pig with someone holding the pig in an upright position, but some pigs will allow trimming while laying on its side. Hoof trimming should only take a few minutes and the pig will be back up on it's feet. Remember to give the pig a few treats to show the pig that hoof trimming is not so cruel after all.