Congratulations on adopting a new family member. This baby Hedgehog can be a fun, interesting, affectionate and unique addition to your household.

Here are a few simple suggestions to make sure you baby hedgie remains happy and healthy for years to come.

**Feeding you Baby Hedgehog:**

Baby hedgehogs need to wean off their mommy for at least 6 weeks. After that time it is the mother who decides when to stop, and she will tell her babies “no more” and nudge them away. At that time it is important that the baby quickly learn to watch mommy as she eats hard food and drinks from a drip bottle. Your baby has been eating PURINA ONE KTTEN FOOD (blue bag) thus far. A favorite treat would be Meal worms, either live or dried. We feed our hedgies about 4 meal worms per treat. Green poop is a sign that you may want to reduce extras and revert back to just Purina One, then gradually go back to more supplements. Live meal worms are available on the net.

The water in the drip water bottle should always be **BOTTLED WATER ONLY** and never tap water.

**Bath Time for hedgies:**

A bath can be a fun and rewarding experience for your baby and yourself. About 4 inches of water in a bathroom sink is plenty. You want hedgie to be able to stand in the water with head out of water. Hedgies do not swim well. They do however float. So when calm you can put hedgie on his back so he slightly balls up and he will float and look up at you with those adorable eyes. We use a tooth brush and Johnsons Baby Shampoo (no more tears). Scrub baby with the toothbrush and don’t forget feet and belly. Stay away from the eyes and mouth. Then rinse in warm water and wrap baby up in a towel. This is a good time to hold your baby and walk around telling him how cute and clean and wonderful he/she is. It’s a great bonding experience and baby will LOVE this. Clipping babies toenails is optional but after a few tries you will get better at it and hedgie will trust you more and allow you to do it well. Make sure to dry baby completely so the skin does not dry out.

**Playtime and socializing.**

When you first bring baby home it is VERY important to spend time with him/her. This is first time away from mommy and siblings and baby is bound to feel the loss. He/she will be looking to you for affection and assurance and to know that you are there to take care of them and protect them forever. Baby will need one hour of out-of-cage affection and play each evening. Hedgie is nocturnal so the best time to do this will be evenings when baby wakes up. We start about 8:00 and play into the night. Play can be a Hamster ball, lap time, a toilet paper roll (favorite toy EVERY) or just exploring you and your surroundings. Keep hedgie in sight at all times or they can disappear quickly. Hedgies also enjoy daylight so on a nice day you can wake him/her up to go outside (supervised) or jump into a fanny pack for a road trip. Hedgies love to travel with you and see all the things you see during your day. We find the more you take hedgie places and introduce him/her around, the better your animal will be around people and the calmer he’she will be during different activities. TAKE HIM/HER WITH YOU!

**Proper temperature is important. (please read twice)**

It is very important that the hedgehog be kept at an even temperature of 73-76 degrees. Do not let the animal get below 70 degrees. A small heater is enough to keep the cage warm enough. Do not use heating pads. SEE Dave about complete heated Habitat kits.

**Cage cleaning:**

Cages should be cleaned once a week, and baby can have a bath at the same time. Line the bottom of the cage and sleeping area with Pine chips or equal substitute. Do not use aspen or cedar chips. Other options are available but we find pine to absorb odor and please hedgie the best. Of course you should always wear gloves when cleaning the cage. The running wheel may need to be cleaned more than once a week as hedgie will poop on-the-run. This is a chance to help box-train hedgie. Place an aluminum pie tray under the wheel to catch the droppings, and a smart hedgie will soon realize that “HEY…that’s where my poopy goes” and over time hedgie will litter box train. This will help a LOT in cage cleaning and frequency.

**Fleece cage liners are always the best choice for lining the bottom of the cage.**

**Ask Dave for details about buying a set right away!**

**Vet Care:**

Hedgies do not require any shots and seldom need to see a vet. The only time a vet may be needed is injury or sudden unusual illness. There is only one exotic animal vet in the Triangle. Should you need a vet please call Healing Paws Vet clinic at ((919) 245-3437. Located in Hillsborough NC. You may also want to call Dave and see if this is something we have seen before.

**Biting/Training:**

Hedgehogs are loving animals but wild animals just the same. They may occasionally bite unless you train them out of it which can be done. Your baby Hedgie will want to lick your fingers to get the taste and the salt. This may seem real cute but it is not a good thing as licking leads to nipping which leads to biting. You must discourage it from the start. Stop the licking with just discouraging it or changing hands. But if hedgie nips or bites you must blow hard in his face and tell him loudly NO BITING! Hedgie HATE being blown in the face and this is the best discipline you can offer. Soon the nips will stop and your in the clear.

Enjoy your new baby and thank you for trusting Dave’s Domestic Hedgehogs.

We are here to help anytime!!

 LIVE MEAL WORM SOURCE: I suggest ordering about 500 and putting them in the fridge using about

 3-4 per day as treats

Bassett’s Cricket Farm

<https://store.bcrcricket.com/>

Order snookums Giant Meal Worms. 500 for $11.00 plus shipping. CHEAP!

IF YOU EVER NEED A VET

 I suggest you call Dave first. If a vet visit is needed please use

Healing Paws Veterinary Hospital.

800-222-3107 Located just 2 minutes from Daves house in Hillsborough. Exotic vet certified.