



LET'S TALK ABOUT
**PIRATE HOGS
AND BLIND
HOGS**

AN APH CARE GUIDE

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PIRATE AND BLIND HOGS

As most people know, hedgehogs do not really have great eyesight. They rely on other senses such as smell, hearing and use their whiskers for touch as they are in the dark anyway. However, if a hog suddenly goes blind, rather than gradually, with say cataracts, then they are going to need some help to adapt.

Cataracts

Can happen at any age, but generally more associated with older hogs. These start as small translucent milky looking circles, eventually growing larger and milkier in appearance. Young hogs can also get cataracts, this is mainly associated with poor diet and lack of nutrition. You may have been feeding your hog well, but if you did not buy from a reputable dealer then the damage might already have been done as those first few weeks of growth are really important for their development. As these grow with time, and are generally an age thing, then your hog usually has time to adapt and starts relying more on its other senses to get about.

Fatty Eye Deposits

Usually occur when hogs are overweight, they can reduce when they lose weight, but sometimes they stay the same. Fatty deposits just need monitored, if they get too big they could force the eye out of the socket. Generally these are harmless, do not affect the hogs in any way, just an indication that your hog may need to go on a diet.



Ocular Injuries

Unfortunately hogs have very protruding eyes and shallow eye sockets, so eye injuries can be common. To minimise risk, check there are no sharp edges in their enclosure, especially at eye level. Hogs can also damage themselves by accidentally scratching their eye with their claws. An ocular injury is a vet visit, if you act fast then you might be able to save the sight/eye with eye drops, but the chances are you will probably end up with a "pirate hog".



Eye starting to prolapse

Prolapsed Eyes (Ocular Proptosis)

This is when the eye starts to protrude from the socket. The chances are poor that the eye will be saved and they are normally removed by the vet. An urgent vet visit is needed as hogs have been known to try and scratch their own eye out, or the eye ruptures on its own. Either way, you do not want your hog to endure this pain, so get to the vets asap.



Prolapsed eye - these rupture very quickly - urgent vet visit

General Tips

If a multi-level enclosure was used prior to hedgehog's blindness, switch to a single level. A multi-level enclosure is not going to be safe for a blind hedgehog to maneuver, even with safety rails. With everything on the same level, it will be easier for them to find what they want or need.

Keep It Consistent

Another way you can help is to consistently place your hedgehog's cage accessories in the same place each time you clean it or something in it. Many hedgehogs are creatures of habit, so you can definitely use this to help your hog adjust. While they definitely use their sense of smell, that's not going to prevent them from bumping into things. That's why consistency is key to a blind hogs well being.