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Hedgehog Care

African Hedgehogs (*Atelerix albiventris*)

Lifespan:

- Up to 10 years

Diet:

- Commercial hedgehog food, lots of insects (crickets, bee moth larvae)
- Small amounts of diced fruit and vegetables
- Diet for an average-sized hedgehog fed once daily in the evening should consist of:
 - 50% Hedgehog food
 - 25% Fruit/vegetable mixture
 - 25% Crickets or bee moth (or other wild caught insects)
- Water bottle or crock to provide fresh water

Housing:

- Wire cages are not recommended.
- Walls and floor of the enclosure should be smooth, non-climbable, and easily cleaned.
- Soft, absorbent bedding, such as Carefresh/shredded newspaper should be provided.
- A nest box, just slightly larger than the animal should be provided at all times.
- No more than one male should be present in one group/cage.
- Temperature should be kept between 75 - 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

Reproduction:

- African Hedgehogs reach sexual maturity as early as 2 months of age.
- Gestation length is between 34-37 days with a litter size ranging from 1-7 pups.
- Males should be removed from the cage prior to parturition, since cannibalism of young may occur. Weaning generally occurs between 4-6 weeks.

Common Problems:

- Internal/External parasites - see your veterinarian for diagnosis and treatment.
- Respiratory infections - prevented by maintaining the hedgehog's temperature between 75-85 degrees. Clean, absorbent bedding decreases the susceptibility to respiratory and other infections.
- Cancer - Hedgehogs are susceptible to a variety of cancers.