The first time at a hedgehog show is always an exciting time for any young hoglet. You'll get to meet a lot of people and other hedgies. There will be a lot of noise and excitement. It's important you know this ahead of time so you don't get too stressed by it all. I'm 3 years old and have been to five or six shows. So I'm pretty much a veteran.

Now, there are two different kinds of shows. The first is a conformation show where you will be judged according to a standard that was written up by the IHA. The judges give a certain number of points for different things like temperament, body shape, head shape, etc. Whoever gets the most points wins. I find that keeping your quills down really flat helps you out a lot...oh, and don't bite the judge. You'll be asked to go up to a big table and stand on your blankie. You'll be with hedgies of your same gender and age and probably your same color...all the albinos, all the standards, the pintos, etc. If you're good you'll get a real pretty ribbon.
Now sometimes the IHOG shows (or other sorts of games) are held with a conformation show and sometimes alone. These are fun. You get to run races in your ball, usually on a HamTrack, and then you get to run through some hurdles and play with some toys on the floor. It's fun and if you do real well you get some ribbons and a medal at the end.

So, what do you take on your trip? Well, first, you tell your Mom and Dad to pack very light because you'll need a lot of space for your stuff. Most big shows are held in a big hotel and arrangements are made for special rates and a hedgie-friendly staff.

You have to have an appropriate travel container. We have cat carriers with fleece covers on them so we won't get chilled if it's cold. Make sure if it's cold that you have a heat supply...either a Snuggle Disc or hand warmers. And make sure that your Mom packs extra blankies, paper towels and plastic bags just in case you have an accident. It's not a real good idea to eat right before you leave on a car trip...you could get an upset tummy.

Most important are your sleeping arrangements. My Mom tries to get us a room with two double beds. We have our own pop-up tents to sleep in so she puts down a plastic tablecloth and we pitch our tents on the bed. Now you must be sure to have your tent liner, your litter box and wheel, plenty of sleep bags or hats and blankets and your food and water bowls. Oh, and if you have a favorite toy, bring that along, too. Mom also brings an extra plastic tablecloth for each of us in case it's drafty in the room, and she has little clips to hold them on the tents. Oh, and make sure she brings your food, plenty of treats and maybe some water from home so you don't get an upset tummy. Oh, and don't forget to bring your ball if you'll be doing sports events. If you don't have tents, you can use plastic bins, sleep in the bath tub or have your Mom set up a wire coral for you. Just be sure to leave the room clean when you leave so the hotel people will ask us back again.

Now you'll also have to decorate your room so all your friends will know what room you're in. You'll want to have your mom make a sign for your door with your name and maybe your picture on it. Oh, and she also might want to make a sign for the maid not to vacuum in case you should be taking a nap.

Now that you're all settled into your room, we'll talk about some of the other things you'll need. Be sure you have plenty of blankies and a lot of clean-up supplies because there will be poop...we get nervous. Bath supplies are never good. But, if you're going to be in a conformation show you must be clean. A bath will probably be in order, especially if there are games the night before and you do any poop-flipping. A basic first aid kit is nice to have in case you get sick or hurt. It should at minimum have nail clippers, cornstarch, an antibiotic, a couple of syringes, Pepto-Bismol, maybe a little Vaseline and a little aloe gel. You might want to have a small can of food, a couple of syringes, and maybe some Pedialyte in case you would get dehydrated. You have to be prepared for whatever might happen. We have a very big first aid kit that goes with us everywhere.

If you're not going by car and have to fly on a plane, you'll have to get a health certificate from your vet before you go—not a bad idea even if you are going by car. Be sure to check with the airline about their pet restrictions. Some will only take dogs and cats. And you always want to fly IN the cabin with your mom.

Well, I hope to see all of you at some shows this summer. The next really big show is the Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show which will be in Denver, Oct. 12-14. They'll have a website up shortly, so you can check it out!!!!!
Finding a Hedgehog-Savvy Veterinarian
Laura Dunklee

Due to an error in the last edition, we are rerunning this article in its entirety. ~editor

(Disclaimer: We do not vouch for any of the veterinary care provided by any of the vets you may find as a result of this article.)

One of the challenges of being a hedgehog caretaker is finding a veterinarian who is experienced in working with small exotics; or, failing that, finding a veterinarian who is willing to educate themselves in the health issues that affect our quilled charges.

Where to Start
So you have a hedgehog, or are about to get one, and you know that as a responsible hedgehog caretaker you need to have a veterinarian all lined-up and ready to go. But where will you find a healthcare provider for your hedgie? Here are some starting points:

Your Current Veterinarian
You may already have a veterinarian who cares for the health needs of your other critters and with whom you can work comfortably. Ask your current veterinarian if he or she treats hedgehogs or if he or she would be interested in doing so. Some vets like working with unusual animals and feel comfortable taking on new species. However, others prefer to have a more limited clientele. If your vet is not comfortable caring for hedgehogs, then ask if they can provide a recommendation for another veterinarian for your hedgie.

If you strike out with your regular vet, don’t hesitate to ask the front office staff if they know of any vets who work with hedgehogs. The veterinary community is like any other specialized group and chances are that the office staff has spoken with other vet’s offices. They might have some suggestions for you.

On-Line Resources
There are currently several well-maintained, regularly updated websites that have listings for vets who will treat hedgehogs. Check out the HWS list at (http://www.hedgehogwelfare.org). Another hedgehog-specific vet list available at Hedgehog Central (http://www.hedgehogcentral.com).

You might also try the website for the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians (http://www.aemv.org/) which has a link for Vet Listings on the menu bar on the home page.

Several small mammal/exotic mammal groups have vet listings too, and it is likely that if a vet is willing to see and treat other exotics he/she will be willing to work with you and your hedgehog. Check out these websites:

ChinCare - http://www.chincare.com/Pages/VetResources.htm
NetVet Veterinary Directories - http://netvet.wustl.edu/vetdir.htm
Quincy’s Ferret Veterinarian Listings - http://www.quincyweb.net/quincy/vet.html
Seagull’s Guinea Pig Compendium - http://www.aracnet.com/cgi-usr/seagull/vetfinder.cgi

Ask Other Hedgehog Caretakers
If you don’t find a vet in your area on one of the previously mentioned vet lists, ask for referrals on some of the hedgehog discussion forums, such as the HedgehogWelfare list at Yahoo! (http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/hedgehogwelfare/)

Or the Hedgehog_Help list which is also at Yahoo! There are also forums available at Chins-N-Quills (http://www.chins-n-quills.com) and Hedgehog Central (http://www.hedgehogcentral.com).

Ask Other “Exotics” Caretakers
You may not be able to find other hedgehog owners in your area, but chances are that folks own other exotics, such as chinchillas and sugar gliders (and don’t forget rabbit and guinea pig owners – those critters are also considered...
“exotics” by many veterinarians!) and they are likely to have vet listings. Again, look for forums devoted to exotic pets or see if you can find breeders of exotic animals.

**Small Mammal and Wildlife Rescue Groups**

Hit the computer again and start looking for small mammal/pocket pet rescue groups in your area. Search terms might include: your town, your state, and (one of the following at a time): rabbit rescue, guinea pig or cavy rescue, bunny rescue, ferret rescue, chinchilla rescue, gerbil rescue, rat rescue, rodent rescue, hamster rescue, exotic rescue, small mammal rescue, etc.

Another resource you might have some luck with are local wildlife rescue organizations. This time, your search terms might include: your town, your state, and (one of the following at a time) wildlife rescue, wildlife rehabilitation, wildlife rehab, etc.

Also, many times local humane societies have lists of small mammal (mice, rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, etc.) rescue groups. Contact your local ASPCA/Humane Society/Animal Control agencies and ask if they have listings or contact information for small mammal rescue groups. Additionally, some of the larger metropolitan areas have regular “pet press” publications of newsletters. Frequently these publications will contain listings for small mammal rescue groups.

When you contact these groups, either via email or over the phone, explain that you are looking for a vet who might be willing to treat a small exotic mammal and ask if they have any vets that they recommend or regularly work with.

**Hit the Phone**

If all of the above options fail, open your local yellow pages and start calling veterinarians in your area. Ask the office staff or whoever answers the phone if they treat hedgehogs and, if they don’t, if they have anyone to suggest. This is how I found my wonderful vet: three other veterinarians (or their staff) recommended her!

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**Rescue Report for 2006**

Hello Hedgehog lovers! Cyndy and I would like to report the results of the rescue reports for 2006. We hope you find the information interesting and valuable.

**Total Hedgehogs reported on rescue surveys = 93**

- No longer had time for = 22
- Retired breeder/non-producer = 16
- Child/teen lost interest = 10
- Rescue litter = 4
- Owner’s health = 4
- Huffy Hedgie = 4
- Pregnancy/new baby = 4
- Unknown owner surrender = 3
- Classroom pet = 3
- Owner moved/convenience = 2
- Shelter/humane society = 7
- Moving to college = 7
- Owner allergic to hedgie = 2
- Rescued from illegal state = 1
- Pet store = 3
- Abandoned at vet’s/doorstep = 1
- Neglect/dangerous conditions = 1
- Owner moved/illegal state = 4
- Owner financial difficulties = 1

Thanks to each and every one of you who took time to fill out a rescue survey. Thanks, too, for rescuing these magnificent little quilled creatures.

Sheila Dempsey and Cyndy Bennett, Rescue Committee Co-Chairs
**The Literary Hedgehog**

Margaret Myhre


Have you ever seen folk art depicting a hedgehog with apples stuck to its back? This picture book offers an unusual explanation for just how such a scenario might have occurred.

It seems that while Hedgehog was nest-building under a tree an apple suddenly fell from the tree, landing on her back and impaling itself on her spines!

With the apple stuck on her back, Hedgie no longer fits inside her new nest so she solicits the help of a passing squirrel. Although the squirrel does his best, he can’t pull the apple from Hedgehog’s spines and, to make matters worse, some of the nuts he is carrying also get stuck in her quills!

Poor Hedgehog wanders through her neighborhood asking every animal she meets for assistance. All offer help or suggestions but with each encounter something else becomes trapped in her spines! Finally Goat comes up with a successful solution and Hedgehog is asleep in her cozy new nest by the time the cold winter winds arrive.

The author of this lovely story was born in Denmark and now lives in England where this story was originally published by Little Tiger Press, an imprint of Magi Publications. Illustrator Michael Terry has created a very expressive hedgehog character and has managed to capture the essence of hedginess that we all know and love. This book is a great companion to M. Christina Butler’s story One Snowy Night, which is also published by Good Books.

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**Do you have an idea for Lucy Laughs?** You can e-mail the editor with your ideas.
~Editor

**Jokes**

What did the hedgehog say when it backed into a cactus?
Is that you, Mum?

What language do hedgehogs speak?
Spine language!

How do hedgehogs play leapfrog?
Very carefully!

What do you get if you cross a hedgehog and a sheep?
An animal that knits its own jumpers (sweaters).

What did the birthday balloon say to the hedgehog?
Hi, Pop!

Reprinted with permission from the DfT child road safety website.
It all started last fall with a delicious lunch at a newly opened café in a neighboring village. The café has a little display area and there I saw a postcard of a hedgehog dressed in human attire. The cafe is European in style and cuisine. When I told the owner I knew all about hedgehogs he remarked that he fondly remembered them from his childhood in Latvia.

A few weeks later I received a telephone call from a local newspaper reporter saying he'd heard I had hedgehogs and asking if he could come visit me for a newspaper article. It turned out he lives in the same neighborhood as the café owner and thus the exchange of info.

The reporter's visit was a very good experience. The newspaper photographer who came along had even owned hedgehogs in the past. The article was well written and included photos of Buckwheat and me. I made sure the Hedgehog Welfare website was included in the article. Many local folks saw the article, of course, and as a result I have received some contacts about hedgies from folks I did not know.

The week of Ground Hog Day I received a phone call from the local radio station. One of their talk show hosts had seen the newspaper article which mentioned that Ground Hog Day had originally been Hedgehog Day. Would I be willing to talk about it on their show? Well, of course I would. The show is an early morning one so at 6:20 am when they phoned for the live interview, I reported that Buckwheat, Heather and Jasper had been up for a long time and could not see their shadows (it was cloudy with oncoming snow). This means there will be an early spring here in upper New York State. I told the story of the Ancient Roman myth and how it had evolved to the present day. We also chatted about hedgies in general. The talk show hosts were so pleased they've already scheduled me for next year!

Another contact, came from a lady about 40 miles away from me who said she'd seen the newspaper article. She'd just rescued a hedgie from a family who no longer wanted it. This was her first hedgie and she had questions. She has since visited me. Her hedgie is a love and she is very open to learning all that is best for him. Just a few days after Hobie died she phoned me because she had seen a hedgie living under poor conditions in a pet shop and she was concerned about what to do. The pet shop was about 40 miles away from me but I told her I'd take care of the situation.

The pet shop had the largest array of animals I'd ever seen and the conditions were very crowded. I saw rows of shelves with aquariums and cages scrunched in tight together, many containing multiple animals. But they were reasonably clean and were supplied with food, water and hidy boxes. The owner had his USDA license and told me his inspector's name. He said they were on good terms with each other.

He pulled hedgie's (he had just the one thank goodness) tiny aquarium from the shelf and set it on the nearby sink, took off the screen cover, lifted the hidy box and there was this tiny ball of popping cinnamon quills. I picked him up and immediately spoke to him softly and gave him mental images of love and safety. I put this ball of shivering quills in my carrier and paid for him. Told the owner I was a member of HWS and left several copies of our care sheets that I'd made on my copier at home (I'd added my email address). I left my name and phone number with the owner. This pet shop has only been open for a couple years although the owner has had pet stores in New Jersey in the past.
Jasper (as I have named him) had been in this pet store at least seven months and came there from an animal broker in New Jersey. Since he had not sold for such a long time I’m hoping the owner will be discouraged from getting more hedgies. He told me the money is in the aquarium fish not the animals.

Jasper adjusted rapidly to his big cage and to having a wheel. But it took him over a week to eat hardly anything because he was so scared from not having been socialized. He is very scared of being handled and I know it will take him a long time to trust my hands and uncurl for me. I suspect he was handled very roughly at the pet shop. He enjoys lap time in his blankies and will snuggle for as long as I am willing to hold him. Given his background, he has come a long way in a short time. He is so sweet tempered and will uncurl and explore wherever I put him — on the bed or in his playpen. He runs high on his long legs which is very cute to watch. Though when I go to touch him, he literally snaps shut and huffs and puffs. He has become really good in the rolling ball. Now Heather, who never cared much for it before, loves to go in a ball too! In fact Heather seems happier and more relaxed with Jasper around. His cage is on top of hers. They go rolling in their balls together and I put their playpens side by side so they can sniff and interact.

I have three cats and they all get along nicely with all my hedgies. They enjoy interaction time on my bed and watch and sniff each other. I’ve seen one cat jump down on the floor when Jasper gets close to the edge and put up paws as though to warn him not to fall off. The cats also watch Jasper and Heather in their rolling balls.

Jasper is giving me so much joy. Finding him so soon after Hobie died was a great blessing for me especially since just a short time later I lost Buckwheat also. One of the great joys in doing rescue work with animals is seeing them change as you win their trust and a bond is established. Jasper and I have quite a way to go yet and each day brings a bit of new pleasure for me and a better life for him. After all he had been existing for a year with just food and water and a tiny hidey box in a tiny aquarium with shavings. Now he has a life with me and I hope it will be a long one.

--- advertisement ---

On Thursday, June 8, 2006, the idea for the Hedgehog Red Hat Society began formulating in the minds of three breeders, two rescuers, and three hedgie slaves at the base of Pikes Peak in Manitou Springs, Colorado. These nine hedgehog enthusiasts decided to recognize special hedgehog ladies who have reached the grand age of four years old or older. After several meetings and hours of crafting, the Hedgehog Red Hat Society was officially launched on October 10, 2006.

By joining this elite club, your hedgehog will receive:

- Decorated Red Hat
- Decorated TP Tube
- Red Hat Poem
- Welcome Card
- Beautiful Thick Red Hat Lap Pad
- Laminated Membership ID Card
- Membership Certificate
- Photo Page in The Red Hat Album

Each member will receive a special gift and card on their succeeding birthdays. The committee will also be sending out a monthly newsletter. Once a hedgehog girl joins and receives her packet, take a picture of the grand lady in her Red Hat finery and submit it to the committee. That picture along with all the stats will then be placed in a The Red Hat Photo Album. The album will be taken and displayed at all hedgehog functions that a committee member attends.

Come check out the Red Quill Shop. There you will find other nice items to purchase that follow the red hat theme. Candles, pencil holders, bags and photo frames are just some of the things you will find there.
HWS BOARD MEETING HELD THURSDAY, FEB. 8, 2007

Board members present:

Linda Woodring: Chief Volunteer Officer
Donnasue Graesser: Chief Financial Officer
Cyndy Bennett: Rescue Committee Co-Chair
Cindy DeLaRosa: Public Relations Co-Chair
Steph Hyne: Advocacy Pet Store/USDA Liaison Co-Chair

Jennifer Plombon: Vice Chief Volunteer Officer
Sheila Dempsey: Rescue Committee Co-Chair
Jennifer Sobon: Newsletter Editor
Gioia Kerlin: Health/Education Co-Chair

Agenda Item #1: Welcoming New Board Members
The Board welcomed Cyndy Bennett and Jennifer Sobon, our new Board members.

Agenda Item #2: Appointing an Acting Membership Co-Chair
It was discussed that there were some parts of the membership records that were not up-to-date and that possibly we should appoint an acting co-chair to help out until the next election. Jennifer Sobon had said she would be willing to do this and to bring the membership lists up to date. It was voted on and passed that she would be the acting co-chair. Linda will write to the current Membership Chairman to find out if she wants to keep the job or give it up.

Agenda Item #3: The accountability of Board members
Donnasue drafted an Accountability Procedure outlining the absolute minimums required of a Board member as far as communication and attendance at meetings. It was discussed and decided that it should not be written into the Bylaws but that a copy should be distributed to every Board member so they would know exactly what was expected of them.

Agenda Item #4: Pet-Sitting List
Linda reported that although the Pet-Sitting program had been announced on the Welfare group several times, the interest was very low. It was decided that the project should be tabled for now and possibly be tried again at a later date.

Agenda Item #5: Vet Packets
A list of items to include has been put in the Org. files for everyone to look at and comment on. Linda has received approval from Heather Johnson, Laura Ledet and Jeanne Stannoch to use some of their information and is still awaiting approval from the IHA to use things from their website. We will talk about how to distribute the information once everyone has had a chance to look it over.

Agenda Item #6: HWS Website
Linda has gone through the website and made a list of things to add, delete or change to update it. She's now in the process of calling the vets on the Vet List to make sure that they all still handle hedgehogs. She'll work with Janelle on getting that done. We will also make sure that when someone wants to add their vet, that the link will go directly to Jenn.

Agenda Item #7: Updating Adoption Application
Steph, Sheila and Cyndy are working on getting that done.

Agenda Item #8: Business Cards for Board members
At the last Board Meeting we discussed the Board members having business cards. However, Julie is handling that so we will have to wait until she's present. We will discuss it on the Org group.

Agenda Item #9: Changing the bylaws to make the Newsletter Editor and Webmaster appointed rather than elected positions
It was decided after some discussion that the Newsletter Editor would remain an elected position, but since we are paying the Webmaster, we would prefer to have that an appointed position. Since a change in the Bylaws requires a vote by the entire membership, it was decided that we would add the bylaw change as part of the next election.
Hello everyone! While it’s hard to imagine Spring and warmer weather (it’s -5 degrees here in Milwaukee right now and I’m all snuggled into my condo with 4 layers of fleece blankies and a nice warm Snuggle Safe heat disc), Spring really is just around the corner. As all us Molly Girls know, it’s never too early to start thinking about that spring condo remodeling project.

Spring cleaning is the first step. Sort through your stuff and let your Mom or Dad know what items you’re tired of and don’t want any more. Stuffing them repeatedly into your water bowl or pooping on them is a good way to indicate this to your folks. For those of you living with boys, they’ll be a good recipient of what you don’t want any more. You’ll probably have to remind your folks a few times that it’s time “to really scrub those condos out”. This certainly isn’t a job for us Molly Girls to tackle ourselves (why ruin those expensive pedicures?). And don’t forget to have your folks pay some attention to your travel condos as well - spring and summer often bring luncheon invitations and outings you’ll need to attend. During the Spring I like to switch over my beanies, favoring my ladybug, duck and inchworm over my winter beanies, the cat, dog and bear.

For some, Spring means a change in the location of their condos. While it can be nice to have a change of view, remember it may be necessary to put your paw down concerning some of your folk’s more far-fetched ideas. And as the temps warm up, remember to have your fans and air conditioners serviced so they’re ready when the temps heat up.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is the issue of color. I know from watching the Fashion Network on TV with my Mom that yellow is one of the hottest colors for this Spring and Summer (why she is watching the Fashion Network is beyond me. It’s obvious that she’s never used any of the tips we’ve seen!). Yellow happens to be my favorite color so I’m delighted that it’s the new hot color. However, I don’t think we girls need to get tied into having everything yellow. While I’d suggest putting away those deep greens, blues and dark plaids, I think that lighter shades of green, blue, and pink are wonderful Spring/Summer colors. And don’t forget about all the great flowered prints - always a fashion statement in any Molly Girl’s condo.

Enjoy the season girls!

**MARCH**
- Mar 3  Anastasia Beaverhousen Storm
- Mar 3  Emaeleth Storm
- Mar 10 Snuggles Hannah Bennett
- Mar 13  Kiana Shore
- Mar 20 Gypsy Rose Lamb
- Mar 22 Keegan Lamb
- Mar 22 Starla Storm

**APRIL**
- Apr 1  April Storm
- Apr 1  Cola Storm
- Apr 4  Karma Storm
- Apr 8  Darla Graesser
- Apr 17 Julia Amelia Fitzpatrik
- Apr 21  Kokoma Podzer

**MAY**
- May 1  Junior Wrobel
- May 10 Wizard Woodrimg
- May 10 Angus McLean
- May 10 Lucy Fish-Kregear
- May 10 Notch Wrobel
- May 10 Esmirelda Wrobel
- May 13 Sparkies Naomi Bennett
- May 19 Greta Weaver
- May 24 Babette Storm
- May 25 Pepper Storm
- May 28 Greta Storm
Sometimes our little hedgehogs need to be put on soft foods because of tooth loss, gum problems, or other health issues. As always, before changing or adding to your hedgie’s diet, please check with your veterinarian. This is especially important if your hedgehog is currently on medication or is having trouble eating regular food on his or her own.

There are a couple of things to keep in mind when you’re changing your hedgehog’s diet. First, you can be pretty much assured that the hedgie’s poop is going to change in consistency, color, and possibly scent. This is normal as the digestive system adjusts to the new foods but talk with your vet about what to watch for (such as mucous in the stool). Second, many hedgehogs take a while to figure out that the new thing in the food dish is actually food. They may choose to anoint with the new substance, walk through it, poop in it, or do other charming things. Third, hedgehogs seem to do best with foods offered at room temperature or a bit warmer. I’ve no idea why this is but it’s true at least for the quilled kids here.

Many of the following food ideas can be administered via syringe should your hedgehog be so ill that he or she needs to be hand fed. However, if your hedgehog does need to be hand fed, PLEASE clear any of these foods (or any others that you want to try) with your veterinarian before adding them to your hedgehog’s diet.

For feeding your little one I have the following suggestions:

1. Ground-up kibble - I use the same mixture the hedgehog has been getting whole (high-protein, low-fat), grind it in a coffee grinder (reserved especially for hedgie food), and store it in a zip-lock bag in the refrigerator. Then I scoop out some and soften it in warm water. It’s amazing how much water it can absorb! I usually add what I think will be too much water and then end-up adding more after it’s been sitting for a few minutes. Some times I also add a few drops of Omega-3 oils.

2. Canned and packet versions of your hedgehog’s regular kibble – You may want to add some of the regular, ground kibble to the wet version for continuity of flavor.

3. Baby food - I’ve had good luck with the Gerber “Stage 2” foods, especially the chicken and gravy (ingredients: chicken, water, cornstarch), the sweet potato (ingredients: sweet potatoes, water, cornstarch), and the mixed veggies. Also, many hedgehogs like Gerber Graduates Chicken Sticks. When the jar is first opened, the sticks are soft. They can be difficult to get out of the jar without crumbling and can be smushed into small bits with your fingers. After the jar has been opened for a day or two the outside of the chicken sticks may become chewy. When this happens, I just peel off the outside of the stick and crumble the interior (The fluid that is in the jar with the chicken sticks can become somewhat gelatinous - I sometimes add a bit of this liquid to the moist food). I also recommend the Earth’s Best Baby Food brand, too. I warm the baby foods a bit before serving.

4. Mealworms, waxworms, silkworms, crickets, etc. - if your hedgehog is having trouble chewing, he or she may not be able to get through the exoskeleton of live mealworms and crickets and the freeze-dried or roasted versions may also be too crunchy.

But there are several options you can try:

4A. You can take live mealworms, waxworms, silkworms, and crickets and freeze them. Once dead, you can let the insects thaw, mash or grind them up and add them to your hedgie’s wet food.

4B. You can keep an eye on live mealworms as they grow and feed your hedgehog the worms that have just shed their skin (they’ll be white and soft).

4C. Freeze-dried or roasted worms or crickets can be added to the kibble when you grind it. Or you can grind them separately and sprinkle the resulting powder on the moistened food (baby food, moistened kibble, canned cat food, etc.).

4D. You can purchase canned insects (which tend to be a bit softer) and grind or mash them. Remember that you’ll need to keep the insects in the fridge or freezer once you’ve opened the can so they don’t turn rancid.

5. Yogurt - you can purchase small amounts of organic yogurt (you may need to experiment with flavors - my hedgehogs like the vanilla and banana flavors) and offer this as an addition to (or mixed with) the moistened regular food. Stonyfield Yogurt has several options in their YoBaby line including smoothies, whole milk yogurt, and drinkable yogurt. These (and other brands) can be found in the yogurt section of many large supermarkets and in natural food and nutrition stores. Please note, though, that some veterinarians advise against giving hedgehogs dairy products while the hedgehog is on antibiotics. Please ask your vet before adding yogurt to your hedgie’s diet. Also, yogurt from cow’s milk may cause green feces and other signs of stomach upset so you need to be very careful. Right now I’m working with some local small farmers to purchase yogurt made from goats’ milk, hoping that it will be easy on my sick hedgies’ digestive systems.

Another option is cultured soy products, such as Stonyfield Farms’ O-Soy cultured soy yogurt, which contain live, active cultures that assist in the digestive process. You may need to contact a local health food store to find these items.

6. Eggs - One thing that’s been a big hit around here is scrambled eggs. I just whip an egg, cover the dish with plastic wrap, microwave it until done, then cool and crumble before serving. Some people add soy milk before cooking, resulting in a “soft scramble” and other folks make regular scrambled eggs in a frying-pan with butter. Some of my hedgehogs also like well-mashed hard-boiled eggs.

7. Protein Drinks - There are several protein drinks currently available that people have offered to their hedgehogs with good results. The most common brands are Boost and Ensure, both of which...
come in different flavors and different versions. I prefer to offer the vanilla flavor, but I know that some hedgies prefer the strawberry. Boost also comes in a Boost Plus version, which I turn to when there’s lots of weight loss in the little one. I usually water it down a bit (though some hedgehogs like it straight). Please do not give your hedgehog chocolate-flavored anything, as we don’t know if chocolate is toxic to hedgies.

8. Children’s Electrolyte Drinks – While the most common brand is Pedialyte, many stores also offer a store brand. You can now get this in “freezer pop” servings which can be stored at room temperature. The smaller serving size means less goes to waste. If you desire, feel free to dilute this with water… A powdered version is also available which allows you to mix the amount that you want to the dilution-level that you want with not as much waste.

9. Hill’s A/D (and other versions), Critical Care for Carnivores, and Feline Rebound - You will need to ask your veterinarian about these items although Feline Rebound can be ordered online from a few websites.

10. Emma’s Mix – I am currently syringe-feeding a little hedgehog who cannot eat on her own because of a lack of teeth and neurological problems. I feed Emma between 9 and 15 cc’s at a time several times per day (she starts “blowing bubbles” with her food when she’s full). Her weight is stable at about 320 grams which seems to be a good weight for her body size. The mix consists of the following:

- 2 jars (2.5 ounces) Gerber 2nd Foods Chicken
- ½ jar (about 1.25 ounces) Earth’s Best Organic First Sweet Potatoes
- ½ jar (about 1.25 ounces) Earth’s Best Organic First Apples
- ½ container (about 1 tablespoon) YoBaby Organic Whole Milk Yogurt, banana or vanilla OR ½ container Stonyfield Farms’ O’Soy cultured soy yogurt (2-3 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon Earth’s Best Organic Whole Grain Oatmeal or Rice Cereal

I mix these five items in a microwave-safe container and store in the refrigerator. I warm the mix for about 30 seconds (until it’s about room-temperature) before feeding it to Emma. One batch lasts about 3-days. Once they have been opened, the foods shouldn’t be stored for more than a day or two in the refrigerator. I feed the leftovers to my pet rats, who are very appreciative of the treat.

Every month, Maisey travels the world to find the latest and greatest in fashions for hedgies and is showcasing her finds here in Maisey’s Costume Corner. Send your pictures to hedgiemom@comcast.net