Handling & Restraint and Routine Veterinary Care of the Miniature Pig

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Overview

- Handling & Restraint
- Routine Veterinary Procedures
Handling & Restraint

- Hold small pigs
- Crowd/Sorting board
- Crate
- Harness
- “The Pig Flip”
- Panepinto sling
- Chemical restraint
- NO snares; NO hind legs
Holding a miniature pig

Correct

Less correct
Crowd/Sorting Board
Kennel/Crate
Pig-Specific Harness
Pig Flipping
Panepinto sling
Chemical Restraint

- Sometimes sedation is the best restraint
  - **Trazodone** 8-10 mg/kg + **Gabapentin** 20 mg/kg
    
    give orally the night before & ~2 hours prior to visit
  - **Midazolam**: 0.1-0.5mg/kg IM, intra-nasal, etc.
  - **Midazolam** 0.2 mg/kg + **Butorphanol** 0.2-0.4 mg/kg + **Xylazine** 1 mg/kg

  (or **Dexmedetomidine** 10-40 micrograms/kg)

  Combine in 1 syringe & inject IM
Routine Veterinary Procedures

- Physical examination
- Hoof trim
- Tusk trim
- Vaccination
- Deworming
- Nutritional advice
- Spay/neuter
Physical Exam

- Body condition
- Attitude
- Ambulation
- Hair/Skin coat
- Hooves
- TPR
  - T: 99.7-102°F
  - P: 70-80/min
  - R: 13-18/min
  - Life expectancy 17-21 yrs
Normal Anatomy

Carpal glands

Preputial diverticulum

Mental gland
Body Condition: Nutrition

- Commercial minipig feed, livestock or equine feed

- General guidelines:
  - Piglet: ½ cup per 15-20lbs/day
  - Adult: 1 cup per 50-80lbs/day

- Feed to body condition
**Body Scoring in Mini Pigs**

**#1**
- Unable to stand properly, typically an unsteady gait, arched or hunched spine is common. An increase in feed is needed.
- #1 Rarely reaches adulthood at 5 years old, organ damage and early death are common.

**#2**
- Thin, bones can easily be felt with minimal pressure. Needs an increase in feed. Hair tends to be rough and dull, skin often dry and flaky.

**#3 Ideal**
- Bones barely detectable with firm pressure. Nicely rounded.

**#3**
- Tail and head are flush with rump.

**#4**
- Tail and head less visible but not hanging below knees.

**#4.5**
- Eyes visibly more rounded, belly doesn't hang below knees.

**#5**
- Morbidly Obese

**#5 Morbidly Obese**
- Weakened/dropped pasterns, splayed feet, debilitating arthritis in elbows common.

**#5 Blindness and deafness common due to excessive fat. Eyes rarely visible. Tiny “rabbit sized” manure balls are common.

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- "Pudgy"...time to consider diet and promote exercise.

**#3.5**
- Onset of arthritis is likely.

**#3.5**
- Overweight, bones undetectable with firm pressure. Prominent fat hump at shoulders. Fat begins to push ears forward, tail head recessed.

**#4**
- Less active, often arthritic. Poor surgical candidate, if necessary.

**#4.5**
- Likely to become fat blind and suffer from hearing loss, if not already.

**#5**
- Extreme, excessive weight. Pigs this size often stop on dragging belly and have difficulty getting up from a laying or seated position. Breathing difficulties are not uncommon.

**#5**
- Mobility commonly limited. Often have difficulty eating & drinking because bowls tip.

Illustrated by: Dawn Camp

Good Body Condition

- No skin folds over eyes or on forehead
- Ears upright
- No bulging jowls
- Hip bones just visible
- Ribs palpable but not visible
- Belly should not drag the ground
Obesity
Emaciation
General Appearance
Aural Exudate
Shedding
Hoof & Tusk Trim Tools
Hoof Overgrowth

Pre-trim

Post-trim
Tusk Trim
Vaccination

- Rabies
- Erysipelas
- Bordetella
- Pasteurella
- Leptospirosis
- Parvovirus
- Tetanus
- E. coli

- Influenza
- TGE
- Haemophilus parasuis
- Streptococcus suis
- Mycoplasma
- Actinobacillus
- Porcine circovirus
- And so on...
Parasites, Internal

- **GI parasites**
  - Ascaris, Oesophagostomum, Trichuris, Strongyloides, etc.
  - Ivermectin, doramectin, fenbendazole, pyrantel
    - Maybe start with half-dose to prevent GI tract obstruction with massive worm die-off
  - Follow-up fecal flotation
Parasites, External

- Mange mites
  - Injectable dewormer best
- Lice
  - Topical permethrin
- Ticks
  - Frontline spray (off-label)
IM Injections
SQ Injections
Questions/Comments?