

Pregnant Hedgehog Or Fat Hedgehog

An owner questions if a hedgehog is pregnant or fat.

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Q: I adopted two hedgehogs about three months ago and one has doubled in size. The one has a hard stomach, and I wondered whether she is pregnant or just fat. I try not to overfeed them. Can you help me?

A: If you feed your hedgehogs a low-fat diet of cat food or hedgehog food with some dried or live insects, and provide your hedgehogs with an exercise wheel and out-of-cage run-around time, their weight should be under control. Too many treats can cause obesity. Signs to look for in an obese hedgehog include a double chin, "ham hocks" for legs and sometimes even rolls of fat under the armpits

You might have hedgehogs that are of two different sizes. Two babies might start off the same size but, when they mature around 5 or 6 months, you might find that one is considerably larger than the other. This difference occurs because hedgehogs vary in domestic stock. The smallest adults can weigh around 7 ounces, while others can top off at 2 pounds. Just like people, they come in all sizes.

If your two hedgehogs are male and female, then one hedgehog might be pregnant. First, identify the genders, which is very easy as males have what looks like a belly button on its abdomen about an inch above the anus.

If you do have a male and female, assume the female is pregnant and separate the two immediately. Gestation is 35 days. Give the female her own nest box, a good diet and plenty of peace and quiet. There is a lot of information online regarding breeding hedgehogs. I recommend that you get as much information as you can on the subject.