

African Pygmy Hedgehog Goes Into Trance

Why would a hedgehog collapse and seem to go into a trance?

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Q: Our lovely little African pygmy hedgehog has started to randomly drop down onto his belly with legs outstretched. He almost seems to be in a trance. His appetite is fine and an offering of a small piece of banana can bring him around. One minute he will be running around, and the next minute he just lies down on his belly. We keep the room temperature and his cage temperature at about 80 degrees Fahrenheit. We are taking him to the vet's in the morning but feel so helpless tonight. Also our local veterinarians seem very limited in their knowledge of pygmy hedgehogs. Can you help or advise in some way?

A: A number of different conditions in hedgehogs can cause what you describe. It is important that a veterinarian knowledgeable about hedgehogs look at your hedgegie.

If your veterinarian does not see a lot of hedgehogs, many great resources exist for veterinarians to reach out to other colleague who can help guide them on these cases. Your veterinarian should know about these resources, so even if your vet is not up on the latest information on hedgehogs, that knowledge is only a phone call or a mouse click away.

In the case of your hedgehog, I would be concerned about potential heart problems, potential blood sugar problems and even neurologic disease. The physical examination and some blood tests should help your veterinarian answer these questions quickly and give you some direction on how best to help your hedgehog.

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