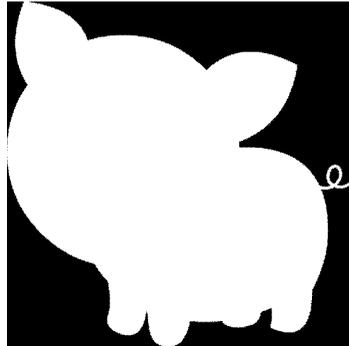




Adobe Veterinary Center  
8300 E. Tanque Verde Rd.  
Tucson, AZ, 85749  
520.546.8387

## The Life of a Potbelly Pig



Whether you just added a new addition of a potbelly pig to your family or you have had one, you have already learned how full of life, character and opinions they are.

Potbelly pigs come in all shapes and sizes and breeds. Some are called micro mini's and other just potbelly pigs. In general they range in size from 60 to 250+lbs, and can grow until they are almost 5 years old.

Your pet is highly food motivated which is great for training purposes but can lead to a problem if treats become excessive and lead to weight gain. Your potbelly pig is very smart, which makes training great but can get them into trouble. It is a good idea to teach your pet to load into a crate and be comfortable and you can also teach them to walk on a leash. A harness is best used when teaching your pig to walk on a leash.

The best diet for your pig is potbelly pig pellets. We recommend Mazuri brand food made specifically for mini or micro potbelly pigs. On the average, a full size potbelly pig will eat no more than 2 cups of food a day. (Young piglets: ½ cup per 15-20lbs per day; Adult: 1 cup per 50-80lbs per day.) Make sure to measure out your pet's food with a measuring cup. Potbelly pigs easily become overweight and it is important to keep your pet at a healthy weight. You will notice that your pet will beg for any type of food. The best type of snacks for your potbelly pig is vegetables (lettuce, celery, carrots, etc.) Please limit the amount of fruit and other snacks that you offer your pet.

Commonly, potbelly pigs will have a lifespan of 15+ years, we have even seen a few pigs that are in their early 20's. Having an overweight potbelly pig can significantly decrease their lifespan. Commonly potbelly pigs will develop severe arthritis in their front legs. Keeping your pig at a healthy weight will aid in delaying the onset of the arthritis as they have less excess weight to have to carry around.

Potbelly pigs love to root! The rooting behavior is natural and should be expected. It is good to give them an area to root in and move objects around. This will hopefully help prevent them from rooting in your house.

They also love to have a wallow, or an area in which they can play in the water. A kiddie pool works very



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well as a wallow.

You will soon learn that your pig loves to be tucked into bed at night. They have a very strong nesting behavior. Pigs love blankets, but you must be careful that your pig does not tear up the blankets and eat them. They also like straw or hay to make a bed outside.

As you probably already noticed, your pig has a very strong opinion about everything. When a pig does not want to do something they will let you know by voicing their opinion. This can be anything from making grunting noises, to screaming, and biting. The older the pig gets the stronger their opinion can become. Many times pigs will show signs of aggression: chomping at the mouth, rapid tail flicking, head swiping. Many times these signs start out very small and before you know it they will be showing aggression. Normally, this continues to develop until about 2 years of age. The best way to discourage your pig from inappropriate behavior is by stomping, making a loud noise, telling them no, and you can use a large blunt object to push them away. Never hit your pig, it can make the behavior worse. The pushing is similar to a nature behavior that occurs between pigs when they are having a disagreement.

Potbelly pigs come with many different hair styles. Some have lots of hair, while other have very little. Once pigs reach about two years of age you will notice that your pig will shed and lose almost all of their hair at least once a year (during the summer). Do not be alarmed, this is normal.

If you have a male pig, we recommend having them castrated once they reach 3 months of age. An intact male pig can show more aggression than a pig that has been neutered.

If you have a female pig, you make notice that they come into heat every 21 days. They start cycling around 3 months of age. Many times you will see a behavior change in your pig during this time. At the time of your examination we will discuss the appropriate time to spay your pig. Normally we recommend the pigs be spayed by at least one year of age. Old pigs routinely develop tumors associated with their uterus and we want to perform the surgery before the tumors have a chance to develop.

You may also notice that your pig needs a pedicure every 6 months to 1 year. As a youngster you can help your pig adjust to having its feet trimmed by playing with their feet and using a finger nail file on their feet to keep them short. The best way to help your pig is to do this when they are very relaxed and receiving a belly rub. Walks definitely help to keep your pigs feet from becoming over grown or having them walking on pavers or crushed granite.

Common medical procedures that are routinely performed on potbelly pigs:

- Physical Examinations
- Hoof trimmings
- Vaccinations
- Dental cleanings
- Spay/Neuter
- Microchips

Website with additional information: [petpigation.com](http://petpigation.com)



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