

# Hedgehogs - Fleas, Ticks, and other Diseases

## Fleas

- Scratching does not indicate fleas – scratching is an essential part of the grooming regime for a hedgehog.
- Fleas are indigenous (specific) to hedgehogs only and do not infest anywhere else – not even your dog or cat!
- Fleas are rarely on a hedgehog, preferring to stay in the nest and feed when the hedgehog is sleeping.
- Do not use anything on a hedgehog to kill fleas. If they are a problem, the hedgehog is likely to be unwell and will need to be seen by a rescue.

## Ticks

Never try to remove a tick from a hedgehog. Incorrect removal can lead to part of the tick's mouth parts being left behind, which can cause infection. Handling a hedgehog to remove one tick is also stressful for the animal. Stress releases hormones which can lower the immune system's ability to fight infection.

- Interfering with a tick can also cause it to regurgitate the stomach contents into the hedgehog – again causing infection.
- One or two ticks are not a problem, they will drop off in due course. Monitor any visible ticks (around 5-7 visible on camera) and they'll drop off.
- A hog with several ticks (10+ or in clumps of ticks) needs attention from a rescue or vet as this indicates an underlying health problem.

## Maggots and Fly Eggs

If you see maggots and/or fly eggs on sick or injured hedgehogs, the hog will **need to be seen by a rescue ASAP**. These usually appear as grains of rice or sawdust like appearances around eyes, mouth, nose, bottom or injury. The eggs soon turn to maggots and feed off the hedgehog hence the requirement to get them to a rescue as soon as possible.

They can be found on sick hedgehogs out in the day laying still/moving slowly or vulnerable, and also on orphaned hoglets who are unable to curl to protect themselves. **They must be seen and treated by a rescue as quickly as possible.**

## Limping / broken Legs / strimmer injuries / other seen injuries

With any injuries like this, try to **collect the hedgehog and get it to a rescue centre ASAP**. Time is always critical for an injured hedgehog.

**Call your local rescue for advice - [Helpwildlife.co.uk/map](http://Helpwildlife.co.uk/map) or call the British Hedgehog Preservation Society on 01584 890 801 [info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk](mailto:info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk)**

©Copyright [Elaine Gardener](#), updated by Dylan A. You are welcome to print and use this information for personal use only. No part of his publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Copyright for personal use only