

PREVENTION

Dealing with quills is a pain and if it happens more than once, it quickly becomes very costly. Unfortunately, most dogs do not learn their lesson after being quilled and will go after porcupines again and again.

Your best bet to avoid dealing with porcupine quills is **prevention**. Here are a few tips to prevent your dog from tangling with a porcupine:

Avoid allowing your dog to free roam early in the morning or early in the evening.

Porcupines are most active at dawn and dusk. Bring your dog in the house or tie him/her up early in the morning and early in the evening.

Supervise or leash your pet when he/she is outside.

Accompany your pet when he/she is outside for bathroom breaks. Leash your dog and walk him/her a few times during the day for adequate exercise and bathroom breaks. This is also a great time to bond with your pet!

Attach a bell to your dog's collar.

Porcupines have poor eyesight. If the porcupine can hear your dog coming, they may have a chance to hide before an unwanted interaction with your pooch.



PORCUPINE QUILLS & YOUR DOG



The DOs and DON'Ts
when dealing with
porcupine quills

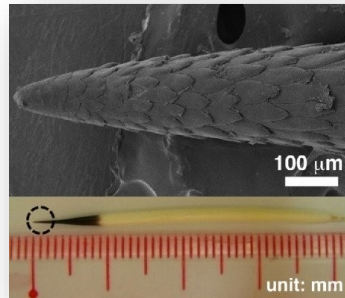
Pesky Prickly Rodents



Porcupines are the third largest rodent and live in many rural areas in North America. They range in weight between 15 and 35 pounds. They are herbivores, slow-moving, and have poor eyesight, although they have a great sense of smell. Because they are nocturnal, they do most of their feeding at night.

Porcupines are not aggressive and will not attack but will **defend themselves if they are threatened**.

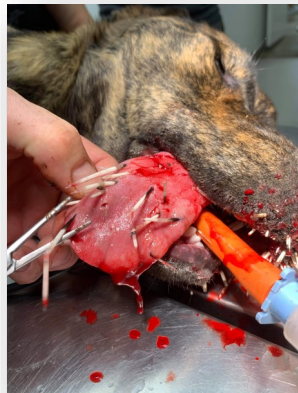
Porcupine quills have barbed tips, like a fishhook, that will cause the quills to continue to move **inward**, deeper into the tissue and are painful to remove. Quills also carry bacteria which can cause infection and abscesses if left untreated.



If your pet has been quilled by a porcupine, **seek veterinary assistance immediately**. Your pet will be in a lot of pain.

It is not recommended to remove the quills yourself. Removing quills without sedation and pain control will be very traumatic for your pet and may cause him/her to bite you. If your pet gets quilled again in the future, he/she will be less likely to allow you to attempt to remove them.

Some dogs will get quills inside their mouth and down their throat. Your pet will not be able to eat or drink. These quills will need veterinary assistance to be removed.



DOs and DON'Ts

Your dog may have tangled with a porcupine out of sheer curiosity or a high prey drive. Whether your dog has 10 quills or 100 quills, there are some important DOs and DON'Ts when dealing with quills.

- ✗ DON'T cut the quills!**
Cutting quills is an old wives' tale. It is a misconception that cutting the quills will "deflate" them, causing the quills to fall out on their own or make them easier to remove. **Quills will NOT fall out on their own.** Cutting the shaft of the quill causes it to splinter and makes it more difficult to remove.
- ✗ DON'T give your dog any medication meant for humans.**
While there are some human medicines that can be used on dogs, the list is very small. Some human medication can make your dog very sick or can potentially kill them. Only give medication prescribed by a veterinarian.
- ✗ DON'T let your pet suffer with quills.**
Leaving the quills in your pet's skin can cause serious complications and damage. The longer they are in your pet's skin, the softer they become which makes them harder to remove. Soft quills will break into smaller pieces, continuing to move deeper into the tissue, causing infection, abscesses and can migrate to major organs and joints.
- ✓ DO call your local veterinarian's office.**
A veterinarian will be able to sedate or anesthetize your pet to remove quills without inflicting pain and causing more trauma. Antibiotics will be prescribed to prevent complications from infection.
- ✓ DO keep your pet as calm and comfortable as possible.**
Prevent your dog from pawing at his/her face or trying to rub his/her face on the ground as this will push the quills further into the tissue.
- ✓ DO follow all aftercare instructions given by the veterinarian.**
Be sure to follow all aftercare instructions provided by the veterinarian. Recovery is usually fairly quick but always keep a close eye on your pet as there is a potential for follow up care.