

Lessons from the

Porcupine



A porcupine is a mammal and the prickliest of all rodents. A rodent is a small animal with large gnawing incisor teeth that continue growing throughout the animal's life time.

The latin word for porcupine is "quill pig". There are over twentyfour different types of porcupines. The Old World porcupines which are in Europe and England are known as ground dwellers. The New World porcupines found in North America are know as tree dwellers. The North American porcupines are found in wooded regions from Alaska to Mexico.



The African porcupines are also ground dwellers and their quills can be one foot long and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter. The average life span of a porcupine is five to seven years. The adult porcupine can weigh up to 25 to 35 pounds.



Porcupines have 30,000 quills on their body which are located on their back and sides. When in danger they arch their backs and stretch their stiff sharp quills up for protection. If they are attacked the predator will get a nose or mouthful full of sharp quills. The quill tips have scales and barbs which makes them difficult to remove. The porcupine will grow new quills to replace the ones they loose. They cannot shoot their quills.

Porcupines do not eat meat. They chew and eat the bark off trees, leaves and shrubs. They are shy animals but very helpful for by eating bark and leaves they bring sunlight into the dense forest. Porcupines will often eat paddles and tool handles for they like the salt from human sweat.

Porcupines are master climbers. They have strong feet and curved paws. They sit, eat and sleep safely in trees. There are also good swimmers.

A porcupine's vision is poor but they have an excellent sense of smell. They do not hibernernate. In the winter they use caves, tree trunks and snowbanks for shelter. Their homes are called dens.

Porcupines are nocturnal animals which means they are awake and search for food at night. They make screeches and low grunt sounds and waddle and shuffle along. They do not need speed for their quills protect them.

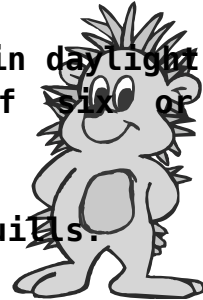


The baby porcupines are called porcupettes, and the mother porcupine gives birth to one or four babies at a time. They are born with soft quills which quickly become stiff and hard within a few days. When born they are about the size of a small tea cup. Porcupetts are mammals and nurse from their mother. They leave their family and go out on their own when they are six months old.



How well do you know your porcupine? True or false?

1. Porcupines may be slow but they have great vision.
2. Porcupines can shoot their quills up to five feet.
3. Porcupines love to eat grubs, worms and ants.
4. Porcupines wander around in the woods and eat in daylight.
5. The female porcupine has large litters of six or more porcupettes.
6. Porcupines leave their family after one year.
7. Porcupines make good pets when you pluck the quills.
8. Porcupines hibernate in the winter.
9. Porcupines are often seen hopping around in the woods.
10. Porcupines sleep upside down in the trees.
11. Porcupines build their homes in old eagle's nests.
12. People have used porcupine quills to write letters.
13. Porcupine spelled backwards is enipucrop.



Word Scramble

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waddle

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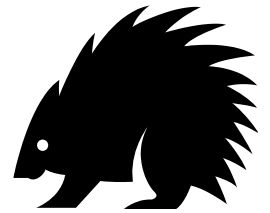
porcupette

sleep

For answers go to www.healingprivatewounds.org and look for "Lessons from the Porcupine" in their "Resources" page and go to the end of the document.

What can we learn from the porcupine?

Porcupines have quills to protect themselves. Children do not have quills but they can use their voice and learn other ways to protect themselves so when they are threatened or hurt they will know what to do. Porcupine realizes their bodies are their own and will not allow anyone to harm them.



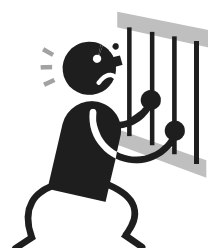
Your body is your own and you also need to learn how protect it from harm. Children have the right to say "stop" when they feel uncomfortable about certain touches. If someone touches you in your private area you should immediately say stop and then go tell a person you trust. If that person does not believe you, go tell another until someone believes you and takes care of the situation. A teacher is always a safe person to tell. Private area touches are wrong and can be very hurtful.

If someone asks you to touch their private to see you with no clothes on, or shows videos with people with no clothes on say go tell on that person, even if you like Some people will offer children money or will touch their private parts or allow theirs.



areas, or wants you pictures or "no" and then that person. favors if they them to touch

Private areas should stay private. Children have rights and should be respected. When you say "No" others should not force you to do what is wrong. Children should also respect the privacy of



others and not ask friends to do things that involve their private areas. Real friends will not ask this or do harm to each other. Adults and children can get into serious trouble if they make you do things that involve your private parts. When adults or kids touch children in their private areas or make them do things to their private areas it is called sexual abuse and sexual abuse is against the law.

If you have been touched in your private areas or made to touch someone else, you need to know you are not bad and it was not your fault. It is important to tell someone so it will not happen again. Children often do not know what is right or wrong. People who touch children in their private areas will often do it to other children if they are not stopped. Do not let feelings of fear or embarrassment keep you from telling what happened. It was not your fault.

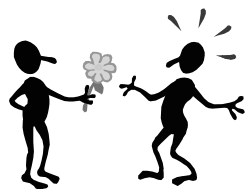


Someone may tell you to keep the “private touching” a secret, or say this is something special just between the two of you. Do not keep secrets of this kind. Sometimes a person will threaten you if you tell. It can be scary to tell on that person but it is very important that you do. The sexual abuse will not stop until you tell.



It is OK for a doctor to examine you and see your private parts if another person is in the room. It is also OK for a parent or guardian to see and touch you when you have a problem in your private area.

Most the time it will be someone you know and perhaps like or love that will try to touch you or play with your private areas. It can be a brother, sister, cousin, grandparent, dad, mom, or your parents friend, an uncle, a foster parent, friend, coach, neighbor, group leader, or a church worker. It is seldom a stranger.



A boyfriend or girlfriend may want to touch you in your private areas too. Because you like them you may be tempted to say OK but it is not OK! Let them know up front that you do not play or behave that way for you have learned it is wrong and they can get

into serious trouble.

No matter who it is, you should say “NO” and if they force you anyway tell on them as soon as you can. Tell until someone believes you and stops the bad touching. Remember it is not your fault and you are not bad or in trouble. You are a great person and that has not changed. The shame you feel belongs to the one who touched you or sexually abused you. They are responsible for doing wrong, not you. The bad touching will not stop until you tell.



You may want to please and do what an adult asks because you like them, but do not do anything that involves

taking off your clothes, especially your underwear. Be bold and use your strong voice and say, "No" and then go tell someone.

Children can also say no to other touches like kisses on the mouth or tight body hugs or tickles in certain areas or whatever that makes them feel unfomfortable. You have the right to your own body and can say what you like and don't like. You can give people high fives or hand shakes instead and tell them you are not comfortable being hugged or kissed.



Children have power in their words. When you say No or Stop in a strong voice your words can help you. You may be only a child or teenager but you have the right to say No and should be respected for what you say. Not all people will respect your words but they should. Kids are important and deserve to be treated with respect just like adults. Likewise, kids also need to treat others with respect. If your parents ask you to do a chore or your teacher asks you to do your homework, No is not acceptable. It is your job to be responsible and do your part.



You also have speed in your legs to protect you. Run when you feel afraid. Use your instinct, and do not go places alone or be alone with someone you feel unsafe with. Always take a friend or adult with you whenever possible. Do not talk to people you do not know. And when you are on the internet do not contact or respond back to people you do not know for there are people who search for children to sexually abuse on the internet. They will try to make friends with you first and then want you to do more.



If you have a cell phone call someone when you are afraid or in danger. It is also important to know that sexting on cell phones which is sending or receiveing any sexual talk or picturers of private parts is illegal, and anyone who does

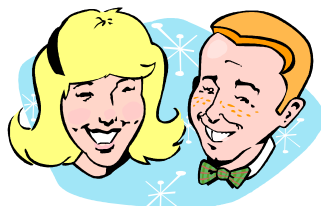
this can get into serious trouble.

Tell others you know about sexual abuse and that it is wrong. Help your friends to say no. If you know a friend who is being sexually abused tell an adult even if they ask you not to tell. Respect each other and do not make fun of anyone or



grab at their private areas. Adults or kids should not call anyone hurtful or degrading names for they hurt badly. If people call you names that are mean or degrading report it. Name calling, pushing people around and touching others private areas are all forms of bullying!

Life can hurt sometimes. Do not keep painful or hurtful things to yourself. Tell your parents, a relative, teacher or trusted neighbor your problems. You are very important and have the right to be treated respectfully and be protected.



We want you to take good care of yourself and use all you've learned to keep you safe. If you are afraid to tell anyone about what happened to you or your problems you can **text or call us at 231-846-4495** or email us at office@healingprivatewounds.org and we can help

you. And if you have any questions about touching or what is right or wrong you can always contact us. You are not alone. We love you and want to help keep you safe.

Your friends at Healing Private Wounds.

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www.healingprivatewounds.org

231 -846-4495

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We love Kids!

Answers to the true and false questions.:

All the answers are false except the last one is true.

