

# **What to Do For Constipated Pig**

by Cathy Zolicani

**If your pig is younger than 3 months old and seems constipated, see your vet**

**If your pig is not eating or is vomiting, see your vet**

Signs of a constipation in the pig: humped up back, straining to defecate with no or little production, little hard fecal balls that are individual, groaning or moaning while trying to defecate.

## **Things You Can Do At Home**

*Increase water consumption to help bowel move and to make moister stool*

- Mix 1/4 apple, prune or cranberry juice with 3/4 water
- Offer Gatorade mixed 1/2 and 1/2 with water
- Mix water into any dry food

*Increase dietary fiber to make softer bulkier stool*

- Pumpkin - most people do not feed enough pumpkin to be effective. For small pigs, feed 1/4 can three times per day. For larger pigs (bigger than 40 pounds), feed 1/2 can three times per day. Feed pumpkin for a full 2 weeks after constipation resolves and gradually decrease the amount fed over 2 weeks until none is being fed.
- Fiber laxatives (Metamucil) - 1 tablespoonful twice a day. This can only be fed if the pigs are drinking plenty of water. Do not just stop giving Metamucil - gradually decrease the amount in diet over 2 weeks after constipation is resolved.
- Increase dietary greens and high fiber cereals (like shredded wheat - no frosting or bran).
- Increase fiber containing fruits and berries - prunes, blueberries, raspberries.

*Lubricate the digestive tract for easier passage of stool*

- Dietary fat - animal fat (lard, Crisco) works best. Give 1 tablespoonful once to twice a day.
- Mineral oil - this oil is tasteless and slippery. If you give it in liquid form, the pig may aspirate and develop pneumonia. Mix it in pumpkin, yogurt, or pudding to avoid aspiration.

*Soften the stool so it is easier to pass*

- Stool softeners - colase or dss - give 1 capsule with food twice a day
- Laxatives - limit the use of laxatives as they can cause diarrhea, which is another serious problem. Miralax is best. Give 2 teaspoonfuls twice a day in food.

*Enemas and suppositories*

- Pediatric suppositories (available at pharmacy) 1 ounce a day per rectum
- Mineral oil enema - up to 15 cc or 15 ml once a day per rectum
- In minor cases of constipation, a warm bath will stimulate defecation