4-H CAGED BIRD PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well. This caged bird project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic caged bird "normals."

Think about your finch, canary, budgie, or parrot. You are important to your bird because it's your job to keep her well and to know when she needs veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your pet bird in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your bird's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. Is your pet friendly and easy to handle? Or is he a little on the vicious side? When does your bird enjoy singing or talking most? Watch for changes in your bird's behavior. The time of day or season of the year may affect his moods. A change in personality, sleepiness, seizures, circling, or paralysis may indicate a nervous system disorder.

Your bird's **stance** or **movement** is, of course, very different from that of other animals because a bird is able to perch and fly! Observe how your bird uses its limbs for climbing and perching. How does he curl his toes for grasping? How does he use his wings and body weight to balance? Normally birds have only four toes on each foot. A bird's neck bones are modified so that it can turn its head completely around for preening or spotting danger.

Learn to handle your bird properly. Frantic movement can lead to broken wings or other injuries.

Keep track of your bird's **weight.** "Eating like a bird" actually means eating an awful lot! Some birds must eat twice their weight daily because they burn up so much energy. So even a short term loss of **appetite** could be very harmful to your bird. A good indicator of weight loss is your bird's keel-shaped breastbone or sternum. The muscles on the breast will rapidly become smaller and the keel will stick out if your bird is losing weight. Take note as to which seeds your bird prefers. Know the amount of water your bird normally drinks each day.

The **skin** of birds has many remarkable modifications - feathers, scales, claws, and preen gland. You should be familiar with the appearance of these structures in your healthy bird so they might serve as illness indicators. All birds can fluff their feathers to form air pockets which insulate them against the cold. Watch for a ruffled appearance. You may be housing your bird in a drafty area. Gently unfold your bird's wing. You should see all the flight **feathers.** Near your bird's skin are the insulating down feathers. Worn out feathers must be replaced. Shedding feathers is called molting. This a normal process. Failure to lose frayed feathers is a sign of illness.

Scales protect your bird's legs. These scales often become thick and pointed as your bird ages.

Your bird should have highly developed **eyesight.** The eyelids should be smooth, not swollen or crusty. There should be no eye discharge. The eye lining should be smooth and pink. The pupils should be the same size and shape. The cornea should be clear. White cloudiness indicates cataracts. The eye shouldn't bulge from its socket, as is common in parrots with abscesses around the eye.

Locate your bird's **ear**. It's behind and below the eye. Of course there are no heavy ear lobes! Check for discharges, swelling or cuts. If your bird appears wobbly, his inner ear balancing mechanism may have been injured.

An obvious characteristic for you to keep track of is your bird's **bodily discharges.** Your bird should not strain when defecating. He should have 25 to 50 formed, target-shaped droppings per day and no bleeding. "Urine" is excreted with your birds black or dark green feces. This creates the characteristic target-like shape. A decrease in droppings may mean your pet is not eating as much as normal. Some regurgitation may be normal.

What about your pet's **voice?** Be concerned if your bird starts talking, chirping or singing less than normal. Perhaps he's unhappy. A lack of male hormones may cause a canary to stop singing.

You can estimate your bird's **heart rate** by placing your fingers against your bird's chest. The normal heart rate is so fast, it's difficult to count. Count the number of beats in 15 seconds and then multiply by four for the beats per minute. Canaries and finches average 500-800 beats per minute, budgies 300-500, small parrots 250-350.

Check your bird's **breathing rate.** Your bird's lungs expand when the chest expands. A large parrot should take about 30 breaths per minute and a smaller bird about 100 when resting.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on your bird every day. When you need to contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed. If you'd like further information of animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your pet bird as a Veterinary Science project animal!

4-H CAT PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This cat project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic cat "normals."

Think about your feline. You are important to your cat or kitten because it's your job to keep her well and to know when she needs veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your pet cat in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your cat's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. An abrupt or gradual change in your animal's behavior may be an indicator of sickness. Does your cat prefer to be alone or does she wind around your legs begging for attention? Does your cat enjoy lying on a sunny window sill or does she prefer a cool bathroom floor? Does your kitten really like playing with the puppy or does her hair stand on end and her tail swish threateningly from side to side? Take note of behavioral changes and try to identify the causes.

Your cat's normal **stance** should be well-balanced on four straight legs. Abnormal posture may indicate skeletal or muscular problems.

Normal feline **motion** should be free and effortless. A healthy cat moves with grace and strength. You may have observed your cat carefully stepping among items on a dresser top, or perhaps you've seen your kitten frightfully pounce on her mouse toy. Watch for lameness or lack of energy.

Keep track of your cat's **weight.** You should be able to feel your pet's ribs easily under a freely moveable coat of skin, fat and muscle. If you can't easily feel the ribs, your cat is too fat. Be concerned with a sudden or gradual weight loss also. This may be a sign of disease, parasitism, or improper feeding.

Your normal feline's **fur condition** is smooth and glossy. Your cat does a lot of grooming by herself, but help her with this chore. Groom your cat regularly. Watch for patches of hair loss. These may be signs of ringworm, a fungal disease which requires veterinary treatment.

Skin and mucous membrane (color and condition) are important indicators. Normally a cat's skin is soft, loose, and pliable. Tight skin may be a sign of water loss or dehydration. Mucous membranes line all body openings such as the eye, ear, nose, mouth, rectum, and vagina. These membranes should be pink and moist in a healthy cat. Dry, dark brown, gritty material in the ear canal is a sign of mites. Your cat's gums should be pink. Unhealthy gums may be pale, yellow, or red.

An obvious characteristic to notice about your project animal is her **bodily discharges.** Normal feces should be well-formed and firm. Abnormal excretions might be runny or filled with blood and mucus. Diarrhea is a sign of many disorders. Pink urine or frequent urination is important to notice. Many cats suffer from cystitis, a bladder infection.

What about your cat's **voice?** Felines are very vocal. Your cat will probably tell you if she isn't feeling well or if she's hungry. And happily, she may also purr, if she's content. Don't ignore your cat's meows. Your ability to listen is an important tool as is your power of observation. Most healthy animals have good appetites. However, this is not always the case with a finicky cat. Know your cat's diet and eating habits. Be careful if you change food. Be sure your cat's dishes are clean. Always provide plenty of water. Take note of the amount of water your cat normally consumes. An unusual increase or decrease may mean trouble. Report this to your veterinarian.

What is a cat's normal **heart beat, pulse rate,** and **temperature?** You can check these vital characteristics occasionally on your pet with the help of someone to gently restrain your cat.

You can feel the **heart beat** by placing your fingertips against your cat's chest just behind the point of elbow. The normal heart beats about 110-130 times per minute in the resting cat.

To take your cat's **pulse,** place your finger at the middle of the inside surface of rear leg near the point where the leg meets the body. This is were the femoral artery passes near the skin allowing you to feel the pulse. The heart rate and pulse rate should be the same. Count the heart beats or pulse for 15 seconds. Then multiply by four to calculate the rate per minute.

To take your cat's **temperature** shake the thermometer down to its lowest point. Lubricate it with vaseline. Insert it two inches into your cat's rectum and leave it there for two minutes. Hold your cat and thermometer firmly. Read the thermometer immediately after removing. The temperature should range from 100° to 102° F.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on your cat every day. When you need to contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your cat as a Veterinary Science project animal!

4-H CAVY PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It is important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This cavy project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic guinea pig "normals."

Think about your sow or boar guinea pig. If it is alert, on the move, and likes to chew, it is probably quite normal. You are important to your guinea pig because it's your job to keep it well and to know when it needs veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your guinea pig in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your guinea pig's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. An abrupt or gradual change in your animal's behavior may be an indication of sickness. Does your guinea pig whistle when you open the refrigerator door? If she normally anticipates lettuce or carrots, a change in this behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

Your guinea pig's **stance** is quite characteristic. Her short legs keep her low to the ground, although she may frequently stand on her hind legs to reach for food or water bottle.

The normal **movement** is a rapid scurrying about the cage. If your guinea pigs sits in one spot without moving for a long time, she could be hurt or sick.

Keep track of your guinea pig's **weight.** Normal weight varies with age and pregnancy. Most adult guinea pigs weigh about two pounds. You should be concerned about a sudden or gradual weight loss.

The **normal hair coat** depends on the variety of guinea pig, nutrition, disease, and age. The English variety normally has the shortest hair coat, while the Peruvian has long flowing hair when properly cared for. Yes, you do have to groom a Peruvian guinea pig! The Abyssinian has an intermediate hair coat with swirling cowlicks. All come in an array of colors, and all should be shiny, clean, and silky-smooth. A rough coat or hair loss in clumps is abnormal. You might suspect lice or mites. Some shedding is expected. Normal baby guinea pigs have hair when they are born!

Skin and mucous membranes (color and condition) are important indicators. Normal skin is soft, velvety, and pliable like elastic. The membranes which line all body openings should be moist and pink. If these are abnormal you might suspect dehydration or anemia.

Because you clean your pet's cage frequently, one of the most obvious characteristics to notice is **bodily discharges.** Fecal droppings should be firm, dry, and a little larger than rice grains. Diarrhea is often a sign of improper feeding, microorganism infection, or stress.

If your guinea pig doesn't seem to be feeling well, you might want to check her temperature. Clean a small rectal thermometer thoroughly and shake it down well below the normal range of 102.1° F. Lubricate it with KY or petroleum jelly. Be sure your pet is restrained properly. Insert the thermometer gently into the rectum and remove after one minute. Then read and record the temperature.

When you contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

Practice recognizing normals on your guinea pig everyday.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your guinea pig as a project animal.

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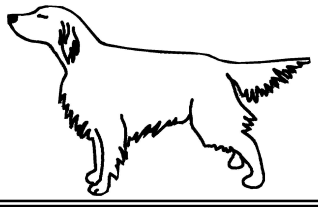
4-H DOG PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT



4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animal so that you can recognize when your pet isn't well.

This dog project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic "normals." Your ability to recognize the following characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your dog in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your dog's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. An abrupt or gradual change in your pet's behavior may be an indication of sickness. Study your dog's eyes, facial expression, and body language. Tail wagging is an important mood indicator. A change in behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

A dog's normal **stance** is well-balanced on four sturdy legs. His topline is normally level with his head held up proudly. Your dog may hang his head if he has been hurt or if he has done something wrong. Groveling at your feet is usually a sign of submission. This may be your dog's way of apologizing.

Some dogs prefer to sleep a lot. Others are extremely active. Some walk sluggishly. Others jump excitedly all over their owners and run until they collapse with exhaustion. All of these **movements** are normal for each individual. Know what **movement and gait** are normal for your dog's breed and age group. Limping is not normal. This is a characteristic you should be able to recognize.

Keep track of your dog's **weight.** Normal weight varies with breed, age, and pregnancy. Some dogs normally appear more "boney" such as an Afghan, while the pug is very filled out and heavily muscled. Be concerned with a sudden or gradual weight loss. This is a sign of several diseases or feeding problems. If your pet appears to be ravenous, allow him to eat. However, if he seems to be gaining weight after he has reached full growth, cut back on his food supply. The normal dog **coat condition** is smooth and glossy, although, this too varies with breed and age. Many breeds' hair coats change drastically in appearance from puppy to adult. Some breeds shed, others do not. Don't mistake normal seasonal shedding for hair loss caused by external or internal parasites, nutritional deficiencies, or other fur diseases. Flea infestation, ringworm, and dermatitis are all abnormal conditions you must recognize early so that your veterinarian can prescribe treatment.

Skin and mucous membranes (color and condition) are important indicators. Normally a dog or puppy's skin is soft, loose, and pliable. Tight skin may be a sign of water loss or dehydration. Mucous membranes line all body openings such as the eye, ear, nose, mouth, rectum and vagina. These membranes should be pink and moist in a healthy dog. Keep an eye on these areas. If any should become dry or reddened, your pet may need medical attention.

An obvious characteristic to notice on your project animal is his **bodily discharges.** Feces should be well-formed and firm. Urine is watery-yellow. Abnormal feces may be runny or may contain blood or mucus. Diarrhea is a sign of many ailments. Blood-tainted urine is also abnormal. Twice each year female dogs will have a bloody vaginal discharge. This is one of their normal signs of heat. This sign may go unnoticed if your bitch runs loose outside. The extent of this condition also varies from one female to another. A dog which drags its rectum on the ground frequently may have plugged anal glands.

What about your dog's **voice?** Most dogs (except the Basengi) use their vocal cords very effectively. Your pet's bark readily makes you aware of unexpected visitors, or perhaps his desire to go outside. You have probably learned to distinguish one type of bark from another. And, you can probably recognize your dog's bark from that of all other dogs. Your dog's yelp, whimper or whine may also let you know when he isn't feeling well. It's important that you listen to your dog. You re lucky to own a pet with such a wonderful ability to communicate with you!

A healthy dog has a good **appetite,** although some dogs like to eat too much. They don't regulate their food intake as well as some other animals do. Watch how much food your puppy or dog consumes in one sitting. Does he save some for later or gulp it all down rapidly? Know your pet's habits so you can recognize any abnormalities. Lack of appetite is a sign of illness or depression. You know you don't like to eat when you're not feeling well!

Unless your pet bites, his **teeth** may often go unnoticed. Aged dogs often have dental problems. Many veterinarians perform frequent dental checkups on canines. A puppy normally has 28 teeth. At six months a puppy normally loses and replaces these teeth with new ones bringing the final total to 42. You should recognize a tartar and calculi buildup or redness of gums. Your pet may need large dog bones and hard biscuits. Preventive dentistry is as important to your pet as it is to you.

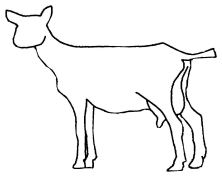
What is your pet's normal **temperature, heart rate, pulse** and **respiration?** Normal temperatures for a dog range between 100.0° and 102.8° F. You can easily take your dog's temperature. Use a rectal thermometer. Shake it down. Lubricate it with vaseline. With your dog standing, hold up his tail with one hand and insert the thermometer about two inches into the rectum. Remove after about two minutes and read the temperature.

Watch your dog's rib cage rise and fall or place a mirror in front of his nose. Count the number of breaths in 15 seconds and multiply by four. Your dog is breathing properly if he takes 12-20 breaths per minute. Normally your dog's heart will beat 100-140 times per minute. You can check this by placing your palm on the left side of the chest wall just behind the point of elbow to feel the beat. In larger breeds, with massive chest walls, you can check your dog's pulse by placing your palm inside his hind leg. By pressing lightly you can feel the blood pulsing through the femoral artery. This should be the same as the heart beat.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on your dog everyday. When you need to contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your dog as a Veterinary Science project animal!

4-H DAIRY GOAT PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT



4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This Dairy Goat project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic dairy goat "normals."

Think about your doe, buck, or wether. If your dairy goat is normal, she's probably lively, capricious (unpredictable), gregarious (sociable), hardy and resistant to disease. You are important to your goat because it's your job to keep her well and to know when she needs veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your dairy goat in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your dairy goat's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. An abrupt or gradual change in your animal's behavior may be an indication of sickness. Does your doe normally come when you call her? Is she normally waiting for you by the gate at milking time? A change in this behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

Your dairy goat's **stance** should be on squarely set, widely spaced, strong, straight legs. Her topline should be level and her head should be alertly carried. These traits will vary with breed and genetic background. However, disease or pain will also cause abnormal conformation. An arched back may indicate abdominal pain. An outstretched neck and sawhorse stance may imply breathing problems. When your doe hangs her head and looks depressed you can probably guess just how awful she feels.

The normal **gait** is a third characteristic with which to be familiar. Your doe should walk gracefully, your buck majestically and your wether probably obstinately! But whatever the movement, it should be well-coordinated. Jerking, limping or circling are signs of leg, feet or nervous system disorders. Keep track of your dairy goat's **weight.** Normal weight varies with breed, age, pregnancy, and stage of lactation. A pregnant doe soon to freshen will of course be heavier, but don't let your dry does get too fat. This could lead to various reproductive disorders. On the other hand, be sure to increase a heavily lactating doe's feed ration so she doesn't become too thin. You should be concerned with a sudden or gradual weight loss. This is a sign of several common dairy goat diseases, such as Johne's disease.

The normal dairy goat **hair coat condition** is smooth and glossy, although this also varies with breed and age. A Saanen exhibits a much shaggier coat than that of the slick-haired Nubian, for example. And we know a young kid's coat is soft and fluffy compared to the bristly hairs which remain on a body-clipped adult. If one of your animals has a rough coat or hair loss, you may start thinking of nutritional disease or parasitism.

Skin and mucous membrane (color and condition) are important indicators. Normally skin is soft, velvety-smooth and pliable like elastic. These traits can be easily observed on the mammary system. Some udder textures are better than others due to genetics, but a sick animal may have skin with hot spots due to infection and tight skin due to water loss or dehydration. Mucous membranes line all body openings such as the eye, ear, nose, mouth, anus, and vagina. Normally, these membranes should be moist and pink. Some membranes, such as those in your nose, possess tiny hair-like structures called cilia. Cilia prevent dust particles from traveling down your trachea to your lungs. If a membrane is dry or white rather than pink, your goat is not normal. When you press you goat's gum, color should return rapidly. If it does not, your animal may be anemic.

One of the most obvious characteristics to notice about your project animal is her **bodily discharges.** Normal discharges are from the anus and vulva. Fecal droppings should be round, firm and dry. Intestinal problems may cause droppings to become moist. Scours (diarrhea) with blood,

mucus or bad odor may even result. This may be caused by improper feeding, microorganisms, infection or stress. Whatever the reason, your ability to recognize the discharge abnormality may prevent dehydration and further trouble. Two normal discharges are released into the vulva. The urethra and vagina end just inside the vulva. So urine and vaginal secretions are kept separate until they exit the goat. Urine should be clear to yellow, not bloody. Vaginal secretions normally occur during the heat period (estrus) and vary from clear to cloudy. A thicker white discharge may be released after breeding. A thick mucous or bloody vaginal discharge may precede the water bag during kidding.

Your ability to recognize changes in these excretions may mean the difference between getting your doe bred or not.

Most discharges from the eyes, ears or nose are signs of irritation or infection and are not normal. Teary eyes or runny nose may be due to dusty hay or something more serious. You must keep track of these occurrences and use your best judgment.

Goats can't talk like people but they can be very **vocal,** some breeds more than others. For example, a Nubian owner must realize his animals ”maa" at the slightest inconvenience. Saanen owners appreciate the calm manner and quiet **voice** for which their breed is known. A doe "bleats" more at milking time, when she's in heat, ready to freshen or separated from her kids. Your goat may call you if she isn't feeling well.

A healthy goat has a good **appetite.** She eats well, but doesn't like dirty or stalky hay. She can be very fussy about her feed. Dairy goats are browsers not grazers as are other ruminants. They can successfully digest twigs and bark but certainly prefer delicate alfalfa leaves. They don't like to eat things close to the ground. You've probably caught your goat stretching up the trunk of a tree to reach the leaves!

You should know if your doe devours her feed ravenously or gingerly minces through her grain. Know what is normal for your goat, so when her appetite changes you'll be aware that her health may have changed.

The first and largest compartment of your goat's stomach is the rumen, and it should be active if all is well. **Rumination** is easy to check. Watch the left side of your goat's abdomen or press and feel if you can't see movement. The rumen should rotate about twice each minute. If your doe's rumen isn't working she won't have a cud to chew either. Cud-chewing is called mastication. Belching of gas in the stomach is called eructation. Mastication, rumination and eructation are three processes necessary for proper digestion.

And you know how important digestion is to **milk production.** Do you know the average milk yield of your doe? Milk yield is influenced by genetic background, but a drop in milk production may signal disease such as mastitis. Five pounds or 2 1/2 quarts of milk per day is common for many does. This results in a record of 1,500 pounds of milk in 305 days or 10 months. Some do produce five pounds every day for 10 months, others peak in 30 to 90 days after freshening and drop off slowly.

This record depends on breed, age, lactation, genetics, and environment. Consider all these factors when you determine what is normal for your doe. You have a great influence on your doe's production. Proper management can improve milk yield and flavor. Inability to recognize normal yield, consistency, color or flavor can lead to disease.

Dairy goat milk is normally whiter than dairy cattle milk. (Yellow carotene is present in cow milk but is converted to Vitamin A in goat milk.)

Goat milk tastes delicious but may vary in richness depending on the breed of the goat. Nubians have a higher butter fat percentage (as do Guernseys), whereas Saanens produce larger yields and lower fat content (as do Holsteins). Protein content also affects flavor due to lipase enzyme activity. Feeding weeds, poor sanitation and improper cooling can off-flavor milk also.

It's important that you understand these relationships so that you can distinguish them from milk problems caused by disease. Mastitis causes lumpy, stringy, watery, bloody or off-flavored milk.

The following set of normals should be checked when any of the previous characteristics are noted to be abnormal.

Whenever you see an abnormal sign you can check your goat's **temperature** with a rectal thermometer. Clean the thermometer thoroughly and shake it down well below the normal range of 101° to 103° F. Lubricate it with KY or petroleum jelly. Be sure your goat is restrained properly.

Insert the thermometer gently into the rectum and remove after one minute. The normal temperature should be 102° F.

Hold you hand or mirror in front of your goat's nostrils to check her **respiration rate.** Twelve to 20 and sometimes 50 breaths per minute is normal. Warm weather may cause panting which is about 250 breaths per minute.

Listen for congestion with your ear against your goat's ribs or with a stethoscope. Congestion is a sign to report to your veterinarian.

Your goat's **pulse** should be strong and steady. Place your hand over the heart at the floor of the chest. Feel the pulse with your fingers, not your thumb. Your thumb has its own conflicting pulse. Fifty to 115 beats per minute is normal. Seventy-five is average.

Normal **blood pressure** is like yours, 120/80. This is difficult to check on a goat.

If membranes have indicated an abnormality to you, such as, anemia (pale pink or white), lack of oxygen (bluish) or jaundice (orange or yellow) your veterinarian may want to do a **blood count.** The normal hemoglobin content is 13 grams per milliliter of blood or 4.1 mg per 1,000 cells. The normal white cell count is 7,400 to 8,940 cells per milliliter. White blood cells are important in fighting disease. It's important that your veterinarian know these dairy goat normals because changes in any of these can help with diagnosis.

When you contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

Practice recognizing normals on your dairy goat everyday.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your dairy goat as a project animal.

4-H FISH PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This fish project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic fish "normals."

Think about your goldfish, tropical fish, or scavengers. You are important to them because it is your job to keep them well and to know when they need medical care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your fish in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Close observation and early recognition of problems is especially important to fish, as they tend to die more quickly when ill than other species. Fish owners often find their pets floating - underside up- before they even realize their pets weren't feeling well! Remember this important health fact: It is much easier to keep fish healthy than it is to cure them.

You are the person most familiar with your fish's normal **attitudes** and **behavior.** Does your fish hide behind plants? Healthy fish are active and keep their dorsal (back) fins erect. Folded fins suggest poor health. Fish constantly at the top of the aquarium indicate foul water and lack of oxygen. So take note of your fish's **movements** of individual fins and swimming habits about the fish bowl or aquarium.

Some sick fish may "shimmy." This wagging movement without changing position is usually the result of a chill affecting digestive organs.

Different species of fish have different **temperaments.** You should be aware of these when placing various species together in one tank.

Goldfish, for example, are peaceful. Rosy Barbs are peaceful, but also very active so they should not be kept with shy fish, such as, the Pearl Gourami. Tiger Barbs are fin nippers and shouldn't be kept with Angels.

Watch for changes in **behavior.** Never give your fish more food than they can clean up in 10 minutes. Your fish may prefer a varied diet, fed sparingly several times a day. The Swordtail does best on a variety of foods. The Peppered Catfish is a scavenger and will normally cleanup leftover food from the bottom. Another scavenger, the Sucker mouth, prefers to eat at night. The Silver Dollar fish will eat most plants except Java fern. You see how important it is that you know your fish's normal eating habits to keep them in good health.

Healthy fish have **skin** covered with beautifully colored, often ornamental, **scales.** This decorative characteristic may be the reason you chose your particular fish. The condition of your fish's body coverings is important to their health. Observe bodies, fins, mouths, and abdomens closely and daily. Notice signs of disease early. "Ich" is a contagious disease which appears as small white specks on fins and body. These cause your fish to itch and become listless. The condition can be easily treated. A white, cottony growth near the mouth is caused by a fungus and can also be treated. If your fish becomes gray, is listless, and refuses to eat, it may have Gill Rot. Medication will help this situation; but if not caught early your fish may die of suffocation.

Other important normals to be aware of are whether your fish species is a **live bearer** or **egg layer.** You may need to provide special equipment for your fish's form of **reproduction.** Also take note, all fish are more prolific during warm weather.

Different species require different, but very specific, **temperature** ranges. Goldfish shouldn't be kept with warm water fish since they prefer a temperature of 68° F. Most popular tropical fish thrive in 75° F water and slightly acid water of pH 6.8. Carefully maintaining this temperature and pH is your most important job.

Fish also have normal bodily discharges. They can even become constipated.

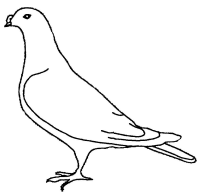
Observing your fish may not be enough. Keep track of the entire **aquarium condition.** Only growing and healthy plants liberate oxygen. Your fish's home may need additional aeration. Watch for algae. This fine, green plant growth is caused by an excess of light. Algae should be removed and light reduced.

You can estimate your fish's **breathing rate** by observing and counting the gill openings and closings. An increase in your fish's normal count may indicate lack of oxygen in the water.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on your fish every day. When you need to contact your veterinarian or consult a fish care guide, you will be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your fish as a Veterinary Science project animal!

4-H PIGEON PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT



4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This pigeon project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic pigeon "normals."

Think about your racing, homing, meat, or exhibition pigeons. You are important to them because it's your job to keep them well and to know when your flock needs veterinary attention.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your pigeons in good health.

You should keep a record of abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis. This is one reason why it is important to band your birds.

Your bird's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. Who is your bird's mate? How do they relate to each other? Are they in their courting, egg producing, or squab rearing stage? Watch for changes in your bird's behavior. Ill health, time of day, or season of the year may affect his moods. Normally pigeon mates are paired to each other for life. However, if a mating is broken by death or separation, the birds will mate again with other birds.

A pigeon's normal **behavior** from courting to squab rearing generally follows specific stages. After mating, a pair will build a nest and lay two eggs, each one day apart. It's important that you provide more than one nest because pigeons will lay eggs in a second nest while feeding squabs in the first.

Egg incubation takes 17 days. The second egg laid hatches 24 hours after the first. Therefore, one bird is older and often dominates the younger.

Pigeons feed their young "pigeon milk" - a combination of the parents crops' secretions and partially digested feed.

The parent pigeons push their fat, full size, 4-week old squabs out of the nest to start another pair of eggs. The squabs become sleek and trim while learning to eat on their own.

Your bird's **stance** or **movement** is, of course, very different from that of other animals because a bird is able to perch and fly! Observe how your bird uses its limbs for climbing and perching. How does he curl his toes for grasping? Notice a pigeon has four toes on each foot. How does he use his wings and body weight to balance?

You can train your pigeon to stand more erect, to hold its tail upright, and to carry its wings and head properly by applying slight pressure to specific areas with a "show stick." Your bird may begin to "show" herself normally whenever someone comes near to observe her.

You will probably notice that each of your pigeons has its own characteristic flight pattern. Some breeds are known for their fancy maneuvers, loops, and tumbling.

Be aware of each bird's normal movements so that you will recognize any problems early.

Keep track of your bird's **weight.** As we've mentioned, squabs are normally fat until they're pushed out of the nest. Pigeons eat a lot of food but keep their stream-lined appearance by burning up a lot of energy. A loss of **appetite** could be very harmful to your bird. Take note of your pigeon's water intake. Pigeons drink by dipping their beak as chickens do. So, you must make sure that their water is at least 3/4 of an inch deep.

Bird **skin** has many remarkable modifications: feathers, scales, claws, and the preen gland. You should be familiar with the appearance of these structures in your healthy bird so they might serve as illness indicators should they become abnormal.

All birds can fluff their **feathers** to form air pockets which insulate them against the cold. Watch for a ruffled appearance. You may be housing your birds in a drafty area. Gently unfold your bird's wing. You should see all the flight feathers. Near

your bird's skin are the insulating down feathers. Worn out feathers must be replaced. Shedding feathers is called molting. This is a normal process. Pigeons molt in the fall and produce very few young during this time. Failure to lose frayed feathers is a sign of illness.

Protective leg **scales** often become thick and pointed as your bird ages. This is normal.

Pigeons like to take baths once each week to keep their skin and feathers clean.

Your pigeons should have bright, alert **eyes.** They should not be watery or puffy - signs of a cold. The eye lining should be smooth and pink. The pupils should be the same size and shape. The cornea should be clear.

Locate your bird's **ear**. It's behind and below the eye. Of course there are no heavy ear lobes! Check for discharges, swelling or cuts. If your bird appears wobbly, his inner ear balancing mechanism may have become injured.

An obvious characteristic for you to keep track of is your bird's **bodily discharges.** Your bird's droppings may become loose if you're feeding only pellets. A mixture of grain and pellets will correct this. Your bird excretes urine as a part of its feces. A decrease in droppings may mean your pet is not eating as much as normal. Regurgitation is normal in pigeons when they are feeding their young.

What about your pet's **voice?** Pigeons make beautiful cooing sounds. A male coos to his mate before breeding and may "talk angrily" to her to drive her into the nest.

You can estimate your bird's **heart rate** by placing your fingers against your bird's chest. The normal heart rate is fast and difficult to count.

Check your bird's **breathing rate.** Your bird's lungs expand when the chest expands.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on your birds everyday. When you need to contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your pigeons as a Veterinary Science project.

4-H RABBIT PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This rabbit project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic "normals."

Think about your doe or buck. If your rabbit is normal she/he is probably quite sturdy, gentle, content, and unexcitable. It's easy to ignore such a quiet pet. Observe your bunny daily to maintain her good health. You are important to your rabbit because it's your job to keep her well and to know when she needs veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your rabbit in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your rabbit's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. An abrupt or gradual change in your animal's behavior may be an indication of sickness. Is your doe normally crabby when you handle her? Does your buck regularly stomp in his cage when he wants fresh water or pellets? Most rabbits carry a look of continuous disinterest as their facial expression. It's difficult to measure attitude from a rabbit's eyes. But maybe your bunny is different. Do you think she smiles or scowls? A change in behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

Your rabbit's **stance** varies. Most rabbits sit with hind legs hidden under their bellies, and forelegs in front of their chests. A doe often rests her head on her fluffy dewlap as if it were a built in pillow! Some rabbits "flip" onto their sides to sleep when they're really tired. You should know whether or not your rabbit does this, or should you suddenly see your bunny flat out on its side you would be needlessly alarmed!

Your rabbit may often "sit up" on her hind legs for a special carrot treat or as a request to be released from her cage. A rabbit's topline is normally rounded. Ears may be erect or flop down depending on breed. Abnormalities in these characteristics may be genetic or due to disease. Myxomatosis causes a rabbit's ears to fall down and nose to appear rounded due to fluid accumulation. However, the French and English Lop rabbits normally have roman noses and floppy ears.

The rabbit's normal **gait** is to hop. Your rabbit may also appear to walk when moving very slowly to nibble grass or sniff flowers. Take note if your rabbit stumbles or drags a limb. A rabbit's light bone structure injures easily. Problems with movement could imply paralysis due to a neurological disorder. Handle your rabbit properly so she doesn't struggle and fall. She could easily damage her back or spinal column.

Keep track of your rabbit's **weight.** Normal weight varies with breed, age, and pregnancy. A tiny adult Polish rabbit weighs about 2 1/2 pounds, while a French Angora may surpass 8 pounds, and a Flemish Giant tips the scale at 22! Increase feed gradually to maintain your pregnant doe's weight. Be concerned with a sudden or gradual weight loss. This is a sign of several rabbit disease problems, such as, parasitism or pseudotuberculosis.

The normal rabbit **fur condition** is smooth and glossy, although this varies with breed and age. Don't mistake normal seasonal fur shedding for hair loss caused by ticks or other fur diseases. A six to fifteen week old rabbit normally molts. This is not abnormal, but adding one-half teaspoon of vegetable oil to the diet per day will help replace lost natural oils.

Scruffy fur may indicate mucoid enteritis. Circular patches of hair loss are signs of ringworm, a fungal disease. Formation of crusts in the ears are signs of ear mites. You should notice these abnormal conditions early so that your veterinarian can prescribe treatment.

Skin and mucous membranes (color and condition) are important indicators. Normally a rabbit's skin is soft, loose, and pliable. Tight skin may be a sign of water loss or dehydration. Mucous membranes line all body openings, such as, the eye, ear, nose, mouth, rectum, and vagina. These

membranes should be pink and moist in a healthy rabbit. Skin rash or scabs may indicate rabbit pox or vent disease. Wet dewlap or hutch burn may redden skin.

An obvious characteristic to notice on your project animal is her **bodily discharges.** Fecal droppings should be round, firm, black, and dry during the day. However, a rabbit releases two types of droppings. At night softer, more brown, moist droppings are released and re-ingested by your rabbit. This practice is called coprophagy. It is not only normal but necessary. These "super" droppings contain many nutrients and vitamins which would be lost if your rabbit were not able to eat them. This practice is necessary because of the unique design of your rabbit's digestive system. Abnormal feces would contain blood or mucus. These may be signs of mucoid enteritis, coccidiosis or pneumonia.

A rabbit's urine is normally more copious (thicker and whiter) than a dog or human, for example.

What about your rabbit's **voice?** Rabbits can grunt and growl when they're provoked and angry. They can also scream when subjected to severe pain. However, when content, your pet probably doesn't have much to say.

A healthy rabbit has a good **appetite.** She enjoys pellets, lettuce, celery, and carrots. A rabbit doesn't like dusty or dirty food, however. Watch how much food your rabbit consumes in one sitting. She probably saves some for later in the day or at night. Many rabbits prefer to eat at night or early morning.

Know your pet's habits so you can recognize any abnormalities. You know you don't like to eat when you're not feeling well!

Observe your rabbit's **nails.** Hold her paw toward a light. The tip of the nail should protrude only slightly beyond the "quick" or nail blood supply. Lack of contact with a solid surface eliminates the friction which would normally wear down your rabbit's nails. Too long nails break easily, often causing digital abscesses, and are dangerous. Trim with human nail clippers within 1/4 inch of the quick.

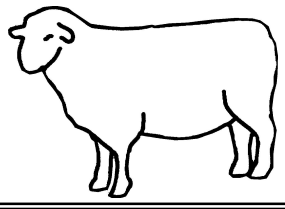
Normal **teeth** are necessary to keep your rabbit in good health. Provide her with items for constant chewing and gnawing. Malocclusion or wolf teeth is a genetic problem where the lower jaw is shorter or longer than the upper jaw. A rabbit with this problem cannot eat properly. Your veterinarian may correct this temporarily by cutting back the teeth.

The normal **temperature** of a domestic rabbit is 102.5° F (plus or minus 10). You can measure this with a rectal thermometer. Lubricate the thermometer with vaseline and insert to about one inch. Remove after two or three minutes and read the temperature.

Practice recognizing and recording many of these normals on you rabbit every day. When you need to contact your veterinarian, be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science project. You may use your rabbit as a Veterinary Science project animal!

4-H SHEEP PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT



4-H Veterinary Science project members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It's important that you become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This sheep project health supplement should acquaint you with the basic sheep "normals."

Think about your ewe, ram, lamb, or wether. You are important to it because it's your job to keep it well and to know when a member of your flock needs veterinary attention.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your sheep in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian begins to formulate a diagnosis.

Your sheep's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. Any change in your animal's behavior may be an indicator of sickness. Does your wether come running at feeding time? Is your ewe a submissive or aggressive member of the flock? A change in this behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

Your sheep's **stance** should be on squarely set, strong legs, and pasterns with heavily muscled rear quarters. Ideally the animal should be long and tall with a straight back. The general appearance should be trim and thrifty. Abnormal stance may be due to poor conformation or may be a sign of illness.

Normal **movement** (gait) is a third characteristic with which you should be familiar. Your sheep should move free and easy with no hesitation (unless she has a stubborn streak). Jerking, limping, or circling are signs of leg, feet, or nervous system disorders.

Sheep can't communicate like people can, but they can be very **vocal.** An ewe nuzzling her young lambs makes soothing, gentle sounds, while a sheep in distress can "baa" very loudly and repeatedly. Learn to distinguish sounds of contentment and fear. Take note if you hear your sheep sneeze or cough. Abnormal sounds may indicate pain or respiratory disease.

A healthy sheep has a good **appetite.** How much does your project animal normally eat in one day? Most sheep prefer leaves and fine stems, so it's normal for coarse hay to be wasted. It's important that you recognize the proper normal condition of your ewes so that you can regulate feed intake appropriately. Be sure to provide fresh water continuously. A normal sheep may eat and drink several times a day. You should be aware of a sudden loss of appetite.

If you're raising sheep for their fleece, their **skin and hair coat** are your livelihood. A sheep's wool coat and how you care for it varies with breed, age, and season. However, any time hair is lost in patches or skin becomes dry and cracked, disease, nutritional problems, or parasitism should be considered. Lanolin in a sheep's wool makes it feel very oily and also attracts dirt. Therefore, a normal, healthy sheep may appear dirty. Some wool breeds should not be washed because washing gives fleece a loose, open appearance. So do a good job of currying and trimming to maintain the fleece.

Skin and mucous membranes (color and condition) are important health indicators. Normal skin is smooth and pliable like elastic. Dehydration or water loss may cause "tight" skin. Mucous membranes line all body openings, such as, the eye, ear, nose, mouth, anus, and vagina. Normally, these membranes should be moist and pink. If they are dry or white your sheep may be abnormal.

Some obvious characteristics to notice on your animal are the **bodily wastes** or **discharges.** Normal sheep feces are pellet-like. Pasty feces may indicate that the sheep needs deworming. This is why lambs' tails are docked. A feces--coated tail attracts disease carrying insects. You should be able to recognize scours or diarrhea. Waste material with blood, mucus, or bad odor may be a sign of intestinal problems. Your sheep's urine should be clear to yellow in color. Bloody urine is abnormal and your early recognition may prevent serious urinary tract difficulties.

Whenever you see an abnormal sign you can check your sheep's **temperature** with a rectal thermometer. Clean thermometer thoroughly and shake it down well below the normal temperature of 102° F. Lubricate it with KY or petroleum jelly. Be sure your sheep is restrained properly and insert the thermometer into the rectum gently. Wait at least one minute and remove the thermometer. Read it immediately. A normal temperature may vary from 101.5° F to 104° F depending on weather and fleece coat.

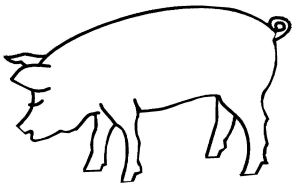
The **pulse rate** (heart rate) of your sheep should be strong and steady. It's very difficult to get an accurate count because the rate increases when the animal becomes excited. Place your hand over the heart at the floor of the chest. Feel the beat with your fingers, not your thumb. Your thumb has its own conflicting pulse. Seventy to 80 beats per minute is normal. You may also feel the femoral pulse at the inner thigh of a rear leg.

Hold your hand or a mirror in front of your sheep's nostrils to check her **respiration rate.** Twelve to 20 breaths per minute is normal. Warm weather may cause fast panting. This is a normal process, but a sign to you. You should get your sheep into cooler surroundings if possible.

Practice recognizing normals on your sheep every day. When you notice an abnormality, contact your veterinarian. Be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed. A veterinarian calls this a "history."

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science Project and you may use your sheep as a project animal.

4-H SWINE PROJECT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT



In the 4-H Veterinary Science Project, Unit 1, members investigate the normal health of several animal species. It is important for you to become familiar with the normal health of your project animals so that you can recognize when one of your animals isn't well.

This swine project health supplement should acquaint you with the pig "normals."

Think about your sow, boar, or piglet. If your pig is normal, it's probably lively, curious, hungry, hardy, and resistant to disease. You are important to your pig because it's your job to keep them well and to know when to provide veterinary care.

Recognition of the following normal characteristics will help you and your veterinarian work as a team to keep your pig in good health.

You should keep a record of any abnormalities which do occur. This record will be important as a case history when your veterinarian forms a diagnosis.

Your pig's **attitude** is a characteristic with which only you are familiar. Any change in your animal's behavior may be an indicator of sickness. Does your pig normally come running at feeding time? Does it get along well with other pigs? A change in this behavior must have a reason. Try to find the cause.

Your pig's **stance** should be squarely set, widely spaced with strong, straight legs. The top line should be slightly arched while the head is alertly carried. An abnormal stance doesn't always indicate a disease, but if accompanied by other signs, it may show the location and seriousness of an illness.

Normal **movement** (gait) is a third characteristic with which to be familiar. Your hog should move freely and easily with no hesitation. Jerking, limping, or circling are signs of leg, feet, or nervous system disorders.

Pigs can't talk like people, but they can be very **vocal.** When your pig is happy it makes a gentle, low-pitched grunt noise. This sound of contentment is easy to distinguish from rapid high-pitched squeals of fear or pain. Have you ever heard your pig sneeze or cough? These abnormal sounds may indicate respiratory disease or an irritation. Get to know the sounds your pig makes. It's an easy way to recognize a potential problem.

A healthy pig has a good **appetite.** Have you ever noticed how much your pig eats in one day? Daily feed consumption should average between 3 and 4 percent of your pig's body weight, up to a maximum of 6 lbs/day. It's also very important to maintain a continuous supply of fresh water. Many pigs eat small amounts of food and water several times each day. Does your pig tend to eat at similar times everyday? Learn to recognize these eating habits so you can realize when abnormalities occur. There are several reasons for a sudden loss of appetite and your pig's health depends on your close observations.

A normal pig has a smooth and glossy **skin and hair coat.** It is slightly oily with no bald spots, cracks, or wrinkles. If your animal has a rough coat or hair loss, you may start thinking of possible nutritional disease or parasitism. Lumps, swelling, cuts, and bruises are also abnormal skin conditions to watch out for. Can you recognize skin problems, such as, mange, lice, abscesses, and sunburn?

Skin and mucous membranes (color and condition) are important health indicators. Normal skin is smooth and pliable like elastic. A sick animal may have skin with discoloration due to infection and tight skin due to water loss or dehydration.

Mucous membranes line all body openings such as the eye, ear, nose, mouth, anus, and vagina. Normally, these membranes should be moist and pink. If a membrane is dry or white rather than pink, your pig is not normal.

Some obvious characteristics to notice on your project animal are **bodily wastes** or **discharges.** Fecal droppings should be semi-firm and shaped like human feces. Intestinal problems may cause feces to become moist. Scours (diarrhea) with blood, mucus or

bad odor may even result. This may be caused by improper feeding, microorganism infection, or stress. Whatever the reason, your ability to recognize the discharge abnormality may prevent dehydration and further trouble. Your pig's urine should be clear to yellow in color, also like a human's. Bloody urine is abnormal and indicates urinary tract difficulties.

Whenever you see an abnormal sign you can check your pig's **temperature** with a rectal thermometer. Clean the thermometer well and shake it down well below the normal temperature of 102.5° F. Lubricate it with KY or petroleum jelly. Be sure your hog is restrained properly and insert the thermometer gently into the rectum. Wait at least one minute and remove the thermometer. Remember that many factors, such as, hot weather, exercise, or excitement may make the normal temperature closer to 104° F.

The **heart rate** of your pig should be strong and steady. It's very difficult to get an accurate count because the rate increases when the animal is excited. Place your hand over the heart at the floor of the chest. Feel the beat with your fingers, not your thumb. Your thumb has its own conflicting pulse. Sixty to 80 beats per minute is normal.

Hold your hand or a mirror in front of your pig's nostrils to check its **respiration rate.** Eight to 18, and sometimes up to 40 breaths per minute, is normal. Warm weather may cause panting, which greatly increases the rate. Watch and listen for signs of abdominal thumping, sneezing, or coughing. These signs should all be reported to your veterinarian. Practice recognizing normals on your pig everyday. When you notice an abnormality, contact your veterinarian. Be prepared with a complete report of all the signs you have noticed.

If you'd like further information on animal health, join the 4-H Veterinary Science Project and you may use your pig as a project animal.

THE NORMAL ANIMAL OBSERVATION CHART

Record observations of your project animal on this chart for one week. Use the health supplement to help you with normals and words to use. When complete, review your observations and note differences from day to day. Continue to observe your animal daily. You may see significant differences from month to month and season to season.

	OBSERVATIONS						
CHARACTERISTICS	**Day 1**	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**	**Day 5**	**Day 6**	**Day 7**
1. ATTITUDE							
2. STANCE							
3. MOVEMENT							
4. VOICE							
5. APPETITE/WEIGHT							
6. SKIN AND HAIR COAT							
7. MUCOUS MEMBRANES							
8. BODY WASTE AND DISCHARGES							
9. TEMPERATURE (Normal)							
10. PULSE RATE (Normal)							
11. RESPIRATION RATE (Normal)							
12. OTHER OBSERVATIONS							

OBSERVING THE NORMAL ANIMAL

Purpose: Learn to use your senses to develop skill in recognizing the normal healthy animal.

Your project animal's health depends on you. You must be able to recognize normalities in order to recognize abnormalities. A systematic way to observe normals is by performing a **physical exam** on your project animal. Be gentle and calm when handling your animal!

THE BASIC PROCEDURE FOLLOWS.

Step 1: Be sure your equipment is handy. You may need: containers with food, water, brush, grooming tools; thermometer, vaseline; stethoscope, watch with second hand.

Step 2: Try to evaluate mental condition. Comparison or familiarity with the animal's normal behavior is important. Does the animal's attitude seem sad or unusually excited?

Step 3: Observe stance. Is the animal's posture normal? Does it hunch its back? This may indicate abdominal pain.

Step 4: Observe movement (gait). Is there evidence of limping (e.g., stiff joints may indicate arthritis)?

Step 5: Listen to voice. Is the cat purring? Is the dog whining?

Step 6: Is appetite normal? Perhaps offer food and water. Keep a record. Mark the water bowl.

Step 7: Observe sexual activity when it occurs. Record heat periods on your calendar.

Step 8: Observe general body condition. Is the animal too fat or too thin?

Step 9: Skin and coat condition. Is hair falling out? Is skin dry and flaky? Does coat shine?

Step 10: Skin color. Press gums. Pink color should come back rapidly. If area remains whitish, animal could be anemic.

Step 11: Examine mucous membranes. Check eyelids, nostrils, mouth, anus, vulva opening. These tissues should be moist and pink. If these areas are not clean it may be because the animal is not feeling well and neglecting itself.

Step 12: Examine discharges. Feces and urine should be normal in color consistency when the animal is healthy. Vulva secretions may indicate infection or sexual activity (in heat).

Step 13: Check body temperature, pulse and respiration rates

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