



(This is considered a more severe prolapse with tearing and bleeding. Others may not be as severe. Those educational pictures will be posted when available.)

Example of rectal prolapse in a two month old Red Wattle gilt. Prolapse can be at different degrees of severity, with bleeding or without. They're usually attributed to outside factors or influence. Some causes may be diarrhea or constipation, strenuous coughing, digestive problems, nutrition, or anything that puts excessive pressure on the digestive/abdominal area causing the piglet/hog to strain in the abdominal cavity. Another outside factor that's seen mostly in cold weather is pig or hog piles. The pressure and weight of others on top causes abdominal pressure to those underneath. It's believed this is the case with the piglet above. In short, any abnormal or increased weight or pressure to the abdominal cavity can cause prolapses. They do not appear to be caused by genetics.

Prolapse in adult hogs may have other contributing factors such as sows in farrowing crates that are too small for the sow, or the sow has positioned herself so that the crate bars put pressure on the anal area creating poor circulation and causing the sow to strain unnaturally. Prolapse can also occur after cycling due to her hormone levels and within one to two days after mating if the rectum has been penetrated. Other causes may be excessive hillsides or slopes that cause the hog to strain while trying to navigate or stand, trauma such as fighting, or a slip or fall, and docking tails too short damaging the nerves to the anus.



Depending on the severity, one fourth of prolapses will heal on their own without intervention. Three fourths require medical intervention of some kind and the more severe may result in eventual death if not treated. Treatment if any is considered minor. The prolapse may be left alone to heal if minor or gently pushed back into place and left alone, or the prolapse may be pushed back into place and secured with sutures, (allowing space for waste elimination), or if severe a small tube may be sutured in the rectum pushing the prolapse into place and allowing it to heal while also allowing a means for waste elimination. The tube should stay in place a minimum of 3 days. Topical antibiotics may be given if seen as necessary or desired. Some well experienced breeders can do these procedures at home and some prefer the assistance of professionals. This are not an expensive procedures and most breeders prefer the professional assistance, advice, and the sterile environment and equipment of a veterinary. In severe or large prolapses a portion of the area may be banded with the intention of the excess tissue dying and falling away during healing. Body waste or elimination should be monitored during this time to assure there are no digestive problems that will prolong or complicate healing. Diet should be monitored for several days and extra fluids given. If the prolapse was caused by digestive problems it may be wise to also add electrolytes such as Gatorade to the water.

In minor prolapses isolation may not be necessary if the prolapse remains in its' proper place. It's important to avoid further injury so you should monitor conditions for a few days. Where tearing or bleeding has occurred or there is surgery you may consider isolation for a few days. This is an injury that could contribute to savaging or cannibalism by other hogs.