 **Facts about intact pigs**

* Intact pigs have a very high possibility of developing reproductive tumors or abnormal cells that can be cancerous. Spaying/neutering ELIMINATES the chances of reproductive tumors.
* ALWAYS get vet records if you’re getting a pig that is supposed to be spayed and/or neutered. There have been times that a pig was supposed to be spayed/neutered and wasn’t.
* There is a condition called cryptorchidism in which one or both of the testicles have not descended into the scrotal sac. This complicates the normal neutering procedure and can be quite invasive to locate and retrieve the testicle. Pigs with this condition CAN still get an intact female pig pregnant. A pig may look neutered from the outside, but may still be intact.
* Intact pigs do NOT usually make great pets.
* Boars tend to have a “musky” scent when left unneutered.
* There is a gland called the preputial diverticulum that collects fluids in boars and is responsible for the musky foul odor, if neutered early in life, this gland doesn’t fully develop and doesn’t usually emit the odor.
* Female pigs go into heat once every 21 days….this means every 3 weeks, for 3-4 days, your intact pig’s behavior is usually hormone driven.
* Behavioral issues have been directly linked to intact pigs along with lack of training. Aggression issues are known to be one of the effects. Hormonal pigs are NOT fun.
* While all pigs get “tusks”, pigs that have been spayed and/or neutered, their tusk growth rate seems to be slower than intact pigs.
* Females and males tend to “mount” objects when intact.
* Both sexes will constantly attempt to attract a mate. This often results in potty accidents (in a pigs mind, they’re leaving a sign for another pig that they’re there.)
* The costs of these procedures vary from region to region and vet to vet. It can be difficult to find a vet who is willing to do either procedure, but finding a vet that spays is especially hard at times.
* There is no magic age to get this done, although most will argue, the sooner, the better.
* Females can go into heat between 8-12 weeks for the first time. Pigs this young CAN get pregnant.
* Male pigs can impregnate an intact female pig very early on. Sons have been known to impregnate their mothers or sisters.
* Intact male pigs are called boars.
* Males that have been castrated before reaching sexually maturity are called barrows.
* Intact female pigs that haven’t had babies are called gilts.
* Intact females that have had a litter are called sows.
* The procedure that is often referred to as neutering is actually called castration. This is the removal of the testicles.
* The procedure that is often referred to as spaying is called ovariohysterectomy. This is the removal of the female reproductive organs including the uterus, uterine horns and both ovaries.
* Castrating a mini pig IS a different procedure than a farm pig and should be done by an experienced vet that knows that the difference.
* Pigs DO feel pain, appropriate sedation/pain meds should be used for invasive procedures of any kind including castrations.
* The older and bigger a pig is does increase the risks of any surgery. The amount of sedatives and gas needed to appropriately anaesthetize a larger pig will be greater than a smaller pig. The amount of tissue that has to be dissected will be greater and the amount of time the overall procedure takes will be longer increasing the risks.
* Female pigs in heat also increase the risks. If you can keep track of heat cycles and schedule the procedure in between, the risk is lower and typically the costs is too.

To learn more about pet pigs, please visit our website at www.minipiginfo.com.