

observers may not be so convinced. Users are advised to abandon treatment after a year if there is insufficient regrowth.³ On stopping treatment all the new hair falls out, so once started treatment needs to be continued for life.⁴ A month's treatment currently costs £30 (private prescription charge).⁵

Except for the few who consider ample scalp hair essential for their work or self esteem, young men are best advised to come to terms with their hair loss. Time spent—on reassuring patients that their natural hair loss is not the social disaster that they believe and on explaining the problems and cost of

treatments—is well worth while. It may save the patient much trouble, anxiety, and money.

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Avoiding injuries caused by pigs

Carry at least two spears

“A wild boar . . . is strongest, armed, and can sooner slay a man than any other,” noted the second Duke of York in 1420.¹ Nowadays in Britain wild pigs are rare, but in Papua New Guinea both domesticated and feral pigs abound. In some highland villages domestic pigs outnumber village residents; in many other areas wild pigs thrive and commonly damage villagers' gardens. Hunting wild pigs remains an exciting pastime, providing highly prized meat enjoyed by the whole clan. In such an environment injuries caused by

startled or wounded beasts are likely to be common. Although much has been written about the cultural aspects of pig rearing in Melanesia,² few authors have commented on injuries caused by pigs. A recent paper by Barss and Ennis corrects this imbalance.³

The average Melanesian pig weighs in at 200 kg and, armed with 10 cm tusks, is a formidable adversary to the hunter. As the paper points out, injuries are commonly so severe that many gored hunters exsanguinate on the spot. Of the 20 patients who managed to reach hospital alive, three had penetrating abdominal injuries with bowel strangulation. Pneumothorax, a torn ulnar artery, injury to the knee joint, and a ripped scrotum were among the other injuries seen. Fluid replacement and intravenous antibiotics may be needed in cases of serious injury and the patient transferred to a hospital for surgical care. Wounds are generally deep and heavily contaminated; they require exposing by incision, débridement, copious irrigation, and delayed closure.

Spearing is the traditional way of killing feral pigs. Hunters carry a single barbed spear and take their dogs, which locate the prey and pursue the injured animals. Some dogs are trained to bite the scrotum of the boars from behind. The authors recommend several strategies to minimise the risk of injury: only skilled hunters should go in search of wild pigs, they should carry at least two spears, and dogs should be strong and well trained. Hunting with a shotgun without dogs should be avoided as the wounded pig may charge the hunter without warning. Care should be taken in handling domesticated pigs—they should be fenced in, and children with food in their hands should be kept well away.

Travellers walking through jungle where there may be wild pigs should be cautious—pertinent advice for medical students during their elective periods. Barss and Ennis give a succinct view of pig injuries in Papua New Guinea.³ Whether implementing their recommended safe hunting and village husbandry practices is possible is another matter.

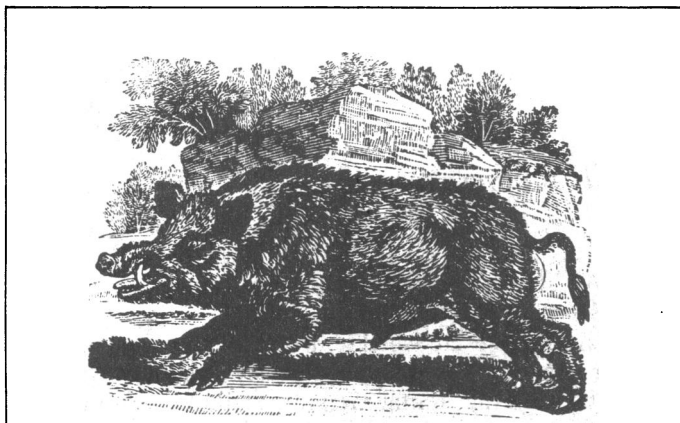
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THE WILD-BOAR,

(*Sus Aper*, Lin.—*Le Sanglier*, Buff.)

WHICH is the original of all the varieties to be found in this creature, is much smaller than those of the domestic kind, and does not, like them, vary in colour, but is uniformly of a brindled or dark grey, inclining to black. His snout is longer than that of the tame Hog; and his ears are short, round, and black. He is armed with formidable tusks in each jaw, which serve him for the double purpose of annoying his enemy, or procuring his food, which is chiefly roots and vegetables: some of these tusks are almost a foot long: those in the upper jaw bend upwards in a circular form, and are exceedingly sharp at the points; those of the under jaw are always most to be dreaded, for with them the animal defends himself, and frequently gives mortal wounds.

Mr Bewick's boar