
**Abstract**

Segregation and medicated early weaning are technologies used to optimize the productivity and health of pigs, but these practices may also cause aberrant behaviors indicative of stress. Thus, differences in early- (≈10 d of age) and late- (≈30 d of age) weaned pigs were investigated. At weaning, pigs were housed in groups of four in 16 pens (eight pens per treatment) in the same facility, and, thus, they were not segregated. Body weights were recorded at birth, weaning, and at approximately 42, 65, 102, 137, and 165 d of age (at slaughter). One-minute, instantaneous scan samples during a 10-min period (at 0600, 1000, 1400, and 1800) were used to record the frequency of lying, standing, and sitting, total number of drinks, feeder investigations, and time spent laying/fighting on 2, 3, and 4 d after weaning. Five-minute, direct observations of each pig were conducted at approximately 40, 60, 80, and 150 d of age. Direct observations were also made of the entire pen for 10 min at approximately 50, 95, 123, and 160 d of age to record aberrant behaviors. At 62 d of age, a handling and blood collection stress was imposed. At 165 d of age, a second stress test was conducted in response to rough handling and transport. Early-weaned pigs spent more time playing/ fighting ($P < .006$) than late-weaned pigs during the 4 d after weaning, manipulated conspecifics more often at 40 d of age ($P < .002$), had greater percentage of hemoglobin ($P < .03$) during Stress Test 1, had greater ADG at 42 d of age ($P < .03$), and had greater hypothalamic growth hormone-releasing hormone receptor mRNA at slaughter ($P < .06$). Late-weaned pigs had greater ADG between 137 and 165 d of age ($P < .03$) and greater pro-opiomelanocortin at slaughter ($P < .04$). Overall, most differences found between early-weaned and late-weaned pigs were evident soon after weaning, but they disappeared before slaughter.

© 2000 American Society of Animal Science