Sudden Death in Bearded Dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*)

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History:
- At a bearded dragon breeding facility, 20 babies hatched normally.

- At one month of age, one developed seizures and died. Six more died suddenly with no apparent clinical signs in one week.
Necropsy:  
- Two juvenile bearded dragons were presented for necropsy.

- No significant gross abnormalities were observed.
Histopathology:
Morphologic Diagnosis:
Liver: Hepatic necrosis, random, mild to moderate, subacute with intranuclear, basophilic inclusion bodies and mild to moderate heterophilic infiltration.

- Inclusions also found in the esophageal mucosal epithelium, renal tubular epithelium, and small intestinal enterocytes.

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Etiologic diagnosis: Adenoviral hepatic necrosis.

Etiology: Agamid adenovirus
Discussion:

Significance:
- *Agamid adenovirus*-1 is an emerging disease of bearded dragons.

Transmission:
- Fecal-oral route or direct contact via oronasal secretions.
- Vertical transmission not proven.
Clinical signs:
- juveniles and immunosuppressed.
- Outbreaks uncommon, but have been reported in the face of concurrent disease.
- Clinical signs range from lethargy, weakness, anorexia, weight loss, diarrhea, head tilt, circling, or sudden death to no signs at all.
Diagnosis:
- Histopathology
- Definitive diagnosis is via TEM or PCR
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References:


Parkin DB et al. (2009) Genotype differentiation of Agamid Adenovirus 1 in bearded dragons (Pogona vitticeps) in the USA by hexon gene sequence, Infection, Genetics, and Evolution, 9:501-506.

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