

Accepted Manuscript

Diagnostic Challenge

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PII: S1557-5063(18)30175-7
DOI: [10.1053/j.jepm.2018.07.001](https://doi.org/10.1053/j.jepm.2018.07.001)
Reference: JEPM 807



To appear in: *Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation*
Seminars in Spine Surgery
Seminars in Arthritis & Rheumatism
Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care
Solid State Electronics Letters

Please cite this article as: Kelsey L. Carter DVM , Christine T. Higbie DVM ,
Thomas N. Tully Jr. DVM, MS, Dip. ABVP (Avian), Dip. ECZM (Avian) , Joao Brandao DVM, MS, Dip. ECZM (Avian)
Diagnostic Challenge, *The End-to-end Journal* (2018), doi: [10.1053/j.jepm.2018.07.001](https://doi.org/10.1053/j.jepm.2018.07.001)

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Diagnostic Challenge

HISTORY

An approximately 4-month-old, 167.5 g, intact female fancy rat was presented to the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine (LSU-SVM) with a 1-month history of sneezing and to evaluate a 1 cm soft subcutaneous tissue mass on the dorsal aspect of the cranium. The rat had been purchased from a pet store as a class pet for a kindergarten class one month prior to presentation. The animal's enclosure consisted of a two level plastic coated metal cage made specifically for rats and lined with plain paper. The paper lining was changed once a week by students in the classroom. The tray in the bottom of the cage was cleaned with a small amount of Dawn dish detergent (Proctor & Gamble, Cincinnati, Ohio USA). The rat's diet consisted of Kaytee brand rat pellets (Kaytee Products, Inc., Chilton, Wisconsin, USA) (offered *ad lib*) and Nutriberies® (Lafeber Company, Cornell, Illinois USA) were offered occasionally as treats. The water source was a single water bottle changed every 2-3 days. No other rats were maintained in the classroom collection, although the owner also housed a chinchilla, turtles, and goldfish separately in the same room with the rat. The owner reported that the rat had a mass on her head when she was purchased from the pet store. At the time of presentation, the rat was bright and alert and behaved in what the owner described as "normal" at home, despite presenting complaints. The remainder of the physical exam was unremarkable. After consulting with the owner, she agreed to have the mass removed. The rat was anesthetized using isoflurane gas in oxygen by facemask, after the patient reached a surgical plane of anesthesia the mass was surgically excised. The

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