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Experimental poisoning by Vernonia rubricaulis in sheep

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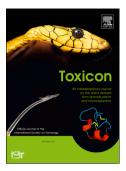
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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Experimental poisoning by *Vernonia rubricaulis* in sheep

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- 21 Hepatotoxicity

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- 29 ABSTRACT
- In order to evaluate the susceptibility of sheep to *V. rubricaulis* and to establish
- 31 the clinical signs, serum biochemistry, and pathological findings, eight sheep
- were fed varying doses of *V. rubricaulis*. The onset of clinical signs occurred 6-
- 48 hours after the ingestion of *V. rubricaulis*. Clinical courses lasted 6-56 hours
- 34 after the ingestion of the plant. Serum activities of aspartate aminotransferase,
- 35 gamma-glutamyl transferase, and alkaline phosphatase were highly elevated
- and glucose blood levels were low in affected sheep. Clinical signs consisted of
- apathy, anorexia, dry muzzle, respiratory distress, abdominal pain, and mushy
- 38 feces with streaks of blood and mucus. Two sheep had neurological signs
- including muscle fasciculation, nystagmus, paddling movements, and blindness.
- 40 Liver necrosis could be detected antemortem through liver biopsy. Five sheep
- 41 died and three recovered. The liver was affected in all necropsied sheep; it
- increased in volume and had marked accentuation of the lobular pattern with
- 43 red, depressed areas intercalated with a pale yellow network. Ascites and

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