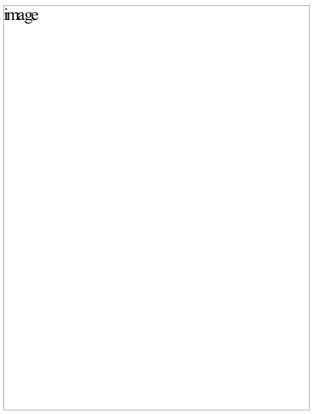

MESENTERIC HETEROTOPIC OSSIFICANS IN A FERRET (*MUSTELA PUTORIOUS FURO*): A RARE CAUSE OF SOFT TISSUE OSSIFICATION

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AEMV Forum

Mesenteric Heterotopic Ossificans in a Ferret (*Mustela putorious furo*): A Rare Cause of Soft Tissue Ossification

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Abstract

Heterotopic ossification (HO) is a rare condition characterised by abnormal bone production in soft tissue. Very few cases of HO have been reported in animals (e.g., dogs, horses) and often this disease process is a consequence of a traumatic incident.

A 5-year-old, male European ferret (*Mustela putorious furo*) was referred for anorexia, generalised weakness and weight loss. Clinical examination revealed multiple abdominal masses. An explorative laparotomy identified omental, white/tan, nodular to coalescing hard lesions. The omentum and spleen were surgically removed during the surgical procedure, with both subsequently submitted for histopathologic evaluation.

Microscopically, the omental masses were composed of a meshwork of lamellar and woven bone admixed with islands of cartilage and lacunae containing either blood, fat and/or bone marrow. Multifocal mineralisation and bone lamellae were also present in the grossly normal omentum.

The finding of multiple bone nodules containing bone marrow and/or adipose tissue, with no Harversian system, and minimal intra-trabecular connective tissue favored a diagnosis of HO.

Key words: **Ferret; Heterotopic ossification; omentum; progressive osseous heteroplasia**

Heterotopic ossification (HO) can be defined as abnormal bone formation in soft tissues. In humans, HO has been classified as both inherited and acquired (secondary) forms.[1] Secondary HO has been hypothesised to have a post-traumatic or neurogenic origin. In veterinary medicine, spontaneous HO following trauma has been reported in dogs and