

DIAGNOSTIC CHALLENGE

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**DIAGNOSTIC CHALLENGE**

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**HISTORY**

A 4-year-old sexually intact female bearded dragon (*Pogona vitticeps*) presented to the Kansas State University Veterinary Health Center (Manhattan, Kansas USA) for lethargy and a swelling on the right side of her head. On physical examination, the bearded dragon was depressed, thin (body condition score 1.5/5) weighed 453 grams, and had pale, tacky mucous membranes. A prominent swelling was present on the right side of the patient's head and extended to involve the periocular region (Fig. 1A). On oral exam, a 2.5 centimeter dark-purple mass was visible, extending from the base of the tongue to the roof of the mouth (Fig. 1B). A blood sample was drawn for a complete blood count (CBC) and plasma biochemistry with the results revealing a packed cell volume (PCV) of 2% (reference interval – 19-40%) and a plasma protein of 4.3 g/dL (reference interval – 3.6 to 6.4 g/dL).<sup>1</sup> The plasma biochemistry was unremarkable.<sup>2</sup> A fine-needle aspirate of the intraoral mass, a cranial ultrasound, and a full-body computed tomography (CT) scan were performed. The aspirate of the mass produced a fluid similar in appearance to frank blood with a PCV of 2%, and the cytology revealed heterophilic macrophagic inflammation with evidence of previous hemorrhage. The aspiration had initially emptied the mass but it rapidly refilled after being drained. On

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