



GASTRIC CANDIDIASIS IN A DOMESTIC FERRET

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ABSTRACT STRUCTURE

Fungal diseases are uncommon in the domestic ferret¹. Only two cases of candidiasis has been described in this species^{2,3}. This case report describes a 2-year-old female ferret presented with anorexia, vomiting and diarrhea over a 2 day period. Supportive treatment and antibiotic therapy was initiated although the patient died. A histopatological examination found a severe acute multifocal necrotizing and suppurative gastritis with abundant intralesional fungi with *Candida* morphological characteristics.

Candida albicans is considered part of the normal flora of the digestive tract in healthy humans⁴ and domestic animals, though during host immunosuppression or alterations in the bacterial microbiota, *C. albicans* can disseminate and cause life-threatening illness⁴. Fungal colonization of the gastric mucosa was shown to be presented in 30-50% of human patients with active ulcerous disease⁵. Further, treatment with the antifungal drug fluconazole in patients with active IBD who were colonized with *Candida*, led to a reduction in clinical signs and in the size of inflammatory lesions⁶.

To author's knowledge, the present case appears to be the first report of invasive mycotic gastritis in a ferret. Future studies are needed to determine whether *Candida* could also play an important role in gastrointestinal ferret disease as in human patients. It would also be interesting to introduce fungal gastritis within differential diagnosis of gastrointestinal disease in ferrets.

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