RADIOGRAPHIC ANATOMY AND BARIUM SULFATE CONTRAST TRANSIT TIME OF THE GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT OF BEARDED DRAGONS (*Pogona vitticeps*)

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ABSTRACT

Gastrointestinal contrast study is a common non-invasive diagnostic technique that does not require anesthesia and enables good visualization of the digestive tract.1-4 Radiographic anatomy and reference intervals for gastrointestinal contrast transit time in inland bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*) were established using seven animals administered 15 mL/kg of a 35% w/v suspension of barium by esophageal gavage. Dorso-ventral and lateral radiographic views were performed at 0, 15, 30 min, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 12 hr and then every 12 hr up to 96 hr after barium administration. Gastric emptying was complete at a median time of 10 h (range 4-24 hr). Median jejunal and small intestinal emptying times were 1 hr (range 30 min-2 hr) and 29 hr (range 24-48 hr) respectively. Median transit time for cecum emptying was 11 hr (range 8-12 hr). Median time for contrast to reach the colon was 31 hr (range 12-72 hr) after administration. Results were compared to those obtained in other reptilian species.4 This technique appeared safe in fasted bearded dragons and would be clinically applicable in other lizard species.

LITERATURE CITED