

Seeds and Bearded Dragons

Are sunflower seeds bad for a bearded dragon?

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

My bearded dragon ate some sunflower seeds. He ate the shells and the inside. Is it OK for me to let him eat these? They were out of my mom's birdseed.

While beardies are able to eat a variety of foods, they definitely don't have the iron-lined digestive tract to dissolve seed hulls! While the seeds were interesting and new for your beardie to ingest, I wouldn't let him do it again. Chances are that he will safely pass the seed hulls, but they could cause an impaction if he ingested several of them. He could probably digest the seed kernels, but I wouldn't chance that, either. Check out the bearded dragon information that I posted a while back that will give specifics for the diet.

My other question is this: How did he find these seeds to eat? If he is allowed to wander around, chances are that he isn't warm enough when he is on his adventures. He should be housed in a temperature-controlled environment, with his temperature ranging from 85 degrees minimum to 95 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit as the focal basking spot. If you are not keeping him warm enough, he may become ill.

Watch him closely for the next few days to ensure that he is defecating normally. If he appears to be straining, or if you see anything unusual, such as blood in the droppings or vomiting, please notify your herp vet immediately.

So, let's avoid the seeds and bird food; they are not good for him!