

Bearded Dragon Lizard With Small Bumps

There are small bumps on the underside of my bearded dragon's rear. Could you tell me what you think this could be?

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

I have recently noticed a line of what I can only describe as small bumps on the underside of my bearded dragon's rear. Could you tell me what you think this could be and any advice about treating them? He appears to be eating OK, and they don't seem to be causing any discomfort as he is still running around as usual.

I can only offer conjecture about what you have asked; a photo or two might really have helped me. If the bumps you are talking about are two bumps, one on each side on the underside of the tail, just past the cloaca then you are asking about hemipenile bulges. Beardies have two copulatory organs, and each is called the hemipenis (plural: hemipenes).

If you are talking about some bumps on the tissue just north of the cloaca, then we might be talking about exaggerations in the scales found there. I have seen some mature males with what I would describe as thickened scales in front of the cloaca. Some lizard species possess femoral pores and precloacal pores, but bearded dragons aren't one of them. If the small bumps are symmetrical and not red or infected in appearance, then I don't think you need to worry.

However, because I cannot offer you a simple explanation, if you have any concerns, and I suspect that you do because you took the time to write in to me, then the next step should be to make an appointment with a herp vet in your area to have your beardie examined. If you never taken the lizard to a herp vet to have an examination and fecal parasite exam, then this is a good idea, anyway. That way you can put your mind at ease, and ensure that your beardie buddy is in good health all around!

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Need a Herp Vet?

If you are looking for a herp-knowledgeable veterinarian in your area, a good place to start is by checking the list of members on the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarian (ARAV) web site at www.arav.com. Look for DVMs who appear to maintain actual veterinary offices that you could contact.