

Watery Lump On Lizard's Limb

What is this growth on my reptile's leg?

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

My leopard gecko appears to have a growth of sorts behind its front left leg. It has the appearance of a water blister and is most notable when it is walking. Any info you could provide me would be greatly appreciated.

You didn't give me a lot to go on. However, whether your gecko is young or old, I think that you should consult a herp vet to find out what this growth is.

It might be something simple, or it could be something serious. Your vet may be able to draw some fluid and cells out of it, stain it and then examine it under the microscope. This may give the vet an idea of what this lump is made of. It may also be possible to have the entire lump surgically removed under general anesthesia. It is also possible to send the tissue off to a pathologist, who can fix, stain and examine the tissue under the microscope, which can often provide a diagnosis.

If you don't currently have a vet, call around and ask a few pet retailers who they use as a herp vet, or call a few dog and cat vets who don't see reptiles, and ask them who they refer reptiles to. When you schedule your appointment, be sure to tell them what the problem seems to be. When you arrive for your appointment, bring in a list of questions that you have, and bring information about how long the growth has been there, what you feed your gecko, any supplement that you offer and most importantly, the temperature range and humidity of your gecko enclosure.

Please don't wait. Schedule an appointment with a herp vet to get this growth evaluated and perhaps removed. It shouldn't be a big deal to have it removed and what it is determined.

Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP has been an avian/exotic/herp animal veterinarian since 1981. She is a regular contributor to REPTILES magazine.

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.