

## Snake with Lumps or Swelling

**My corn snake has soft lumps on either side of his body just before the vent. What is this?**

*By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP*

I recently adopted an 8-year-old male corn and he has a soft (fatty?) lump on either side of his body just before the vent. The previous owner said they developed at about age 4, but they don't seem to be bothering him so nothing was ever done. He does look healthy, he feeds, sheds and defecates normally, it just looks a little strange so I wondered if this was something you have seen or heard of?

Interesting. So, you're telling me that this snake has had these swellings for four years? I'm inclined to believe that these bilateral lumps aren't anything to worry about, but as a veterinary professional, it is my duty to recommend that you find a herp veterinarian who can examine your snake, just to make sure. While this might seem like an extravagant expense since it appears fine, it would be in its best interest to have your vet figure out what these lumps are.

Here's a list of some examples of what these lumps could be (If it is truly a male, as you stated):

- fat deposits
- granulomas
- abscesses
- cryptosporidiosis
- constipation
- parasitic problems (especially amoebiasis)
- foreign bodies
- tumors
- intestinal obstructions
- bacterial or fungal infections
- tuberculosis
- swollen kidneys
- testicular problems
- hernias

Since these lumps have been there for four years and have not appeared to have changed much, if at all, I don't think they are dangerous, but I am not comfortable telling you to just ignore them.

Call your herp vet and set up an appointment. If your vet isn't sure what to make of these swellings, suggest that he or she set up a consultation with an exotics consultant with the veterinary lab that they use for lab testing. This is usually a free service for veterinarians and might be helpful for your herp vet and for your pet snake.

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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](http://www.arav.com). Look for DVMs who appear to maintain actual veterinary offices that you could contact.