

## UPDATE OF REPTILE VIRUSES YOU WILL SEE IN PRACTICE

Ramiro Isaza, DVM, MS, DACZM  
Associate Professor  
Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Florida

### **Abstract**

Over the past several decades, more than 20 viral diseases have been reported in various reptile species. Most of these diseases are described in pathology journals that are not commonly reviewed by small animal veterinarians. The majority of these journal articles are of two types. The first describe well known viral infections in species that are not seen in pet practice, such as paramyxovirus infections in rattlesnakes and fibropapillomatosis in green sea turtles caused by herpesvirus. Although interesting and important diseases, the probability of seeing these species in private practice is remote. The other types are case reports that describe a virus infection from an individual animal. Often these animals had no clinically apparent disease and therefore the virus is of questionable significance to the practitioner. Alternatively, the animal described may have had significant and unique clinical signs never to be reported again in any other animals. When reading a book chapter or review article on reptile viral diseases, the veterinarian is often left with little practical information and the impression that viral diseases of reptiles are of little clinical importance. The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate several examples of viral diseases with recognizable clinical signs that are common in pet species. Once the clinician has learned to recognize these diseases, they can be included as an important part of the differential diagnosis.