

Skin Tumors in Chameleons

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Skin tumors in chameleons are being diagnosed with increasing frequency. Chameleon skin tumor reports in the literature are limited and systematic studies have not yet been performed. This study is the first, to our knowledge, focusing on chameleon skin tumors and providing an overview on the tumors and their possible etiology. In this study, tumors of 62 chameleons were examined including 26 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calypttratus*), 25 panther chameleons (*Furcifer pardalis*), one flap necked chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) and 10 individuals of unknown species. Sixty-four tumors were collected over a period of 13 years. In 2 cases, chameleons were exhibiting 2 different kinds of neoplasia. In 62.5% of the cases, the neoplasia was malignant. Thirteen different kinds of neoplasia were identified. Chromatophoromas occurred most often (25%) followed by squamous cell carcinomas (19%), papillomas (19%), sarcomas (13%) and keratoacanthomas (13%). Metastases were found in 2 cases. Two veiled chameleons exhibited wide spread metastasis to all parenchymatous organs and the gastrointestinal tract. The tumors were identified as a melanophoroma and an iridophoroma. The majority of the samples (66%) came from males, 11% from females and in the other cases, the gender was not known. The age of the animal was known in 40 cases, the average age was 3.5 years. The youngest animal was 1 year of age and the oldest animal was 8 years old.