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BASAL CELL TUMOR IN AN INDIAN LEOPARD

RICHARD J. BROWN^[1], ROBERT D. DAVIS^[2], WALTER P. TREVETHAN^[3], NED L. JOHNSON^[4]

Abstract: A 10 year old male Indian leopard developed a rapidly enlarging mass on the volar left forepaw. Histopathologic examination revealed a basal cell tumor. No reoccurrence has been reported to date, 1 year after excision.

INTRODUCTION

Case Report

In March of 1971 a 10 year old male Indian leopard was acquired by a south Florida Zoological Garden. At that time he exhibited a 2 x 3 cm mass on the volar aspect of the left forepaw. The lesion remained stationary until 3 weeks prior to excision. It had quadrupled in size during the last 3 weeks.

Materials and Methods

The pyramidal mass was 9 cm by 12 cm and weighed 7 grams when removed under a general anesthetic. The tumor was fixed in formalin, embedded in paraffin, sectioned at 7 microns, and stained with hematoxylin and eosin.

Results

The tumor did not appear to be encapsulated, contained multiple sized zones of softening, and was pinkish gray on the cut surface. Histologically, the tumor cells were intimately associated with the

stroma, and many of the nuclei were hyperchromatic. The cells tended to palisade with their long axes at right angles to the long axis of the palisade column (Fig. 1). The tumor was not well encapsulated and contained many islands and lobules, each containing numerous nests of the tumor cells, and separated by thick bands of collagen. The tumor was separated from the epidermis by nests of lymphocytes, a few neutrophils and eosinophils and some fibrosis. Several areas of focal ulceration were present and in these areas there was more acute inflammation.

DISCUSSION

Basal cell tumors or basalomas³ are common in the dog and have been reported occasionally in the cat, horse, and rabbit. Occurrence of this tumor in other animals is considered rare.² In the domestic cat, the basal cell tumor is the second most common skin tumor, exceeded only by the squamous cell carcinoma.¹ It has no anatomic site of preference. The basal cell tumor may reoccur locally, is persistently invasive, but will rarely metastasize and is highly radiosensitive.⁴

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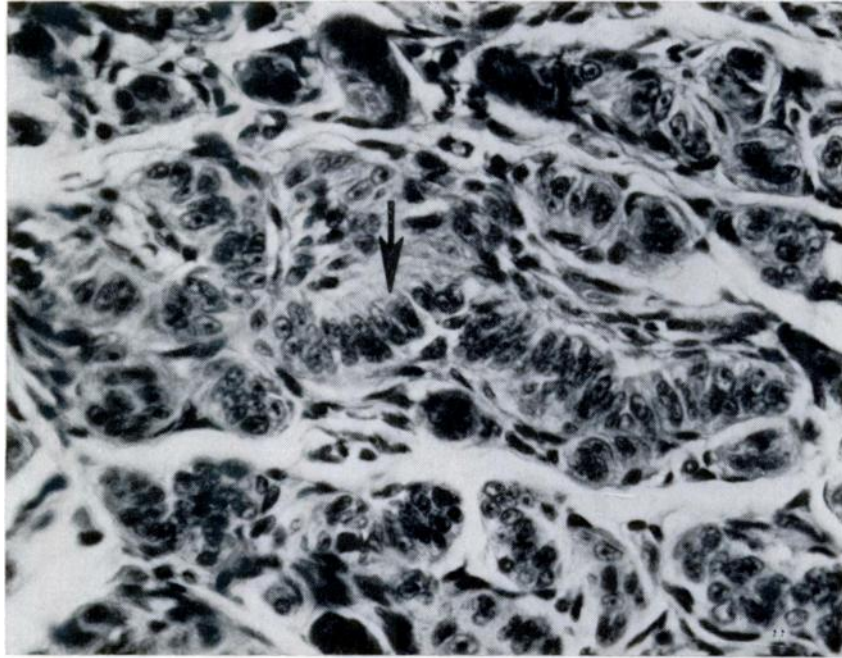


FIGURE 1. Photomicrograph of leopard basal cell tumor. Note the palisading of tumor cells (arrow). H & E, 450 X.

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