



OPOSSUM 201

A stylized profile of a human head in light yellow, with a thick green wavy line representing the hair or a decorative border. Inside the head, there are two black handprints, one above the other, suggesting a focus on human health or safety.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- **INJURED JILLS AND JACKS**
- **EMERGENCY CARE AND TREATMENT**
- **ENDOPARASITES/ECTOPARASITES**
- **TOXINS**

INJURED JILLS

- Separation
- Keeping Her Alive
- Medications



USING THE JILL AS AN INCUBATOR

- Jills can be kept alive and comfortable to achieve proper gestation of the joeys.
- Proper gestation is a very important part of this if the mother can be used to continue to incubate them until you can intervene.

This will transpire mostly to the mother suffering from widespread injuries due to hit by car. Dog attacks can also cause irreversible damage.



SEPARATING THE JOEYS

- **Illness**
 - **Parasites**
 - **Injuries**
 - **Captivity induced stress**
-
- **If the possum needs extensive medical treatments and the babies are at the appropriate development, you can then take over their care and turn the mother over to one on one rehab to give the best chance of recovery for her and the best chance for development for the babies.**



MEDICATING THE JILL WITH HER JOEYS

- When dealing with a mother opossum needing treatment always check the stage and health of the babies before determining a treatment plan.
- You can medicate a mother possum with babies if the joeys are at the appropriate stage of development. There will be limits of what medications you can use as well as strength restrictions.



EMERGENCY CARE AND TREATMENT OF VARIOUS INJURIES



MOTOR VEHICLES

- Stunned
- Broken bones
- Head trauma
- Internal injuries
- Abrasions
- Road rash
- Oil and or dirt on the body



SELF MUTILATION/CAPTIVITY INJURIES

What to look for?

- missing ear tips, tail tips
- bloody digits
- punctures
- sign of blood in the cage/bedding
- lunging or snapping
- rejection

What could cause these?

- Poor husbandry
- Overcrowding
- Stress
- Improper diet
- Insufficient quantity of food/water
- Mixing different sized animals
- Mixing litters
- Placing sick/injured opossum in cage with healthy litter

INTERNAL BLEEDING

Symptoms

- Bruising
- Pale gums
- Lethargic
- Clicking
- Swelling

HYPOTHERMIA (HEAT STROKE)

Symptoms

- Body temp above normal
- Weakness
- Muscle tremors
- Collapsed and comatose
- Lethargic
- Rapid pulse
- Reddened mouth and nasal tissue
- Deep rapid breathing





DEHYDRATION

Symptoms

- Loss of skin elasticity
- Sunken, dry eyes
- Dry gums
- Dry, cracked nose
- Lethargic



EMACIATION

Symptoms

Fairly obvious

Bones protruding

Lack of luster to the fur

Glazed eyes

Weak

Lethargic

Neuro

HEAD TRAUMAS

Symptoms

- Circumstances such as being found on the road, hit by a car, etc.
- Different sized pupils or pupils not reacting to light
- Equilibrium is off
- Bleeding from the ears, nose and/or mouth
- Lethargic
- Dazed



SPINAL INJURIES

Symptoms

- Paralysis of body
- Loss of bowel and urine control
- No reaction to deep pain
- Lethargic
- Glazed eyes
- Shock
- Dehydration
- Increased parasites from immobility



UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

Symptoms

- Labored breathing
- Mucus discharge from the nose
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Lethargic
- Fever

MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES

Symptoms

- Limb bent unnaturally
- Limping or not using limb
- Exposed bone or fragment
- Swelling
- Bruising
- dislocation



ABSCESSSES

Symptoms

- Swollen, large lump
- Area hot
- Draining, infected area
- Fever

If abscess bursts

- Clip or shave the area of the abscess
- Clean surface with mixture of 10% betadine and 90% water.
- Keep open and draining
- Use petroleum jelly, spread lightly on the area to keep open to much the fur will not grow in
- Must heal from the inside out
- May need antibiotics-topical or oral



Shock

Symptoms

- Lethargic
- Glassy stare

- Disoriented
- Semi-comatose or comatose

- body temperature abnormal
- Rapid pulse and respiration

- Slow, irregular breathing
- Pale gums

- Excessive thirst
- sweating

ASPIRATION/WATER STRESSED

Symptoms

- Bubbles from nose
- Clicking
- Abnormal breathing rhythms
- Gasping
- Gray gums
- Hypothermia
- Wet
- Early signs of pneumonia



WOUNDS/INJURIES

OPEN WOUNDS

There are 4 types of open wounds:

- **Abrasion**

- An abrasion occurs when your skin rubs or scrapes against a rough or hard surface. Road rash is an example of an abrasion. There's usually not a lot of bleeding, but the wound needs to be scrubbed and cleaned to avoid infection.

- **Laceration**

- A laceration is a deep cut or tearing of your skin. Accidents with knives, tools, and machinery are frequent causes of lacerations. In the case of deep lacerations, bleeding can be rapid and extensive.

- **Puncture**

- A puncture is a small hole caused by a long, pointy object, such as a nail or needle. Sometimes, a bullet can cause a puncture wound.

- Punctures may not bleed much, but these wounds can be deep enough to damage internal organs.

- **Avulsion**

- An avulsion is a partial or complete tearing away of skin and the tissue beneath. Avulsions usually occur during violent accidents, such as body-crushing accidents, explosions, and gunshots. They bleed heavily and rapidly.

BURNS

Symptoms

Fairly obvious

History from rescuer

Singed fur

Burned smell

Black crusty skin

Skin peeling or falling off





HUMAN INFLICTED

Gun shots

Broken bones

Open wounds

Poisoning

Drowning

Dislocating

Burns

Kept in captivity

use for food source

DOG ATTACK

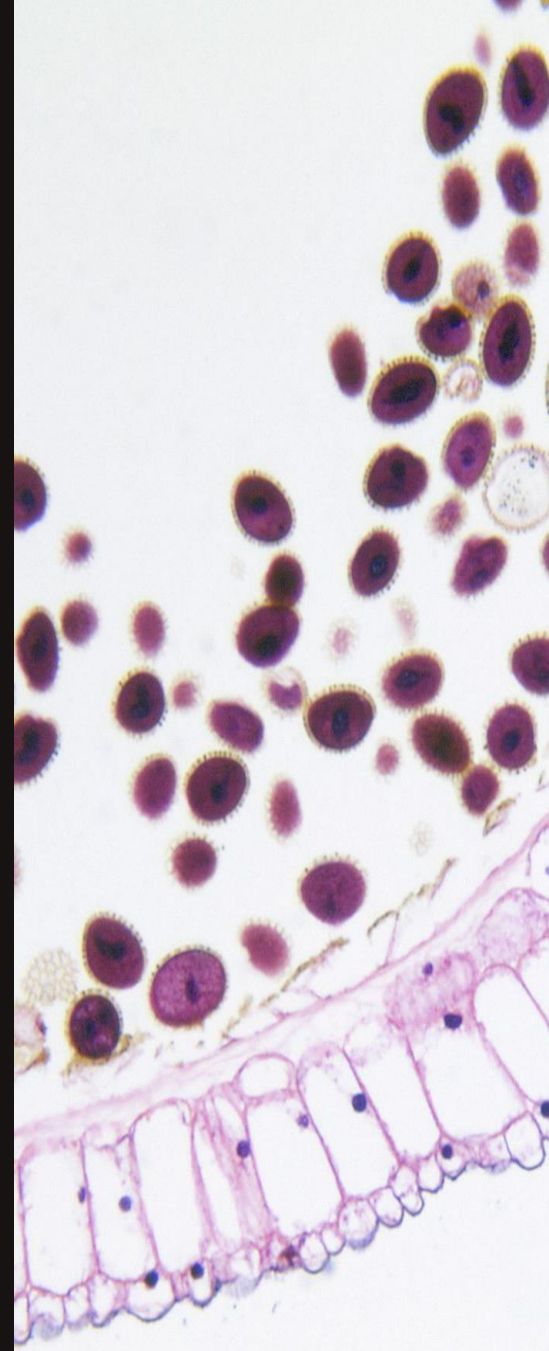
Symptoms

- Internal injuries bruising
- Broken bones
- Spinal injury
- Contusions
- Paralysis of body
- Bleeding
- Fur wet or dried in clumps from saliva
- Shock
- lethargic



DISEASE

Opossums have a spectacular immune system, and a lower than average body temperature. This means that they don't carry a whole lot of the standard zoonotic diseases that other animals might carry. Although an opossum might get rabies, it's very unlikely. However, because opossums do often carry fleas and other parasites, they have the potential to carry the diseases that go along with those.



METABOLIC BONE DISEASE

- Slow development
- Weight concerns
- Slow mobility
- Short snout
- Twisted toes
- Stunted growth
- Kitten fur
- Joint issues
- Effects organs



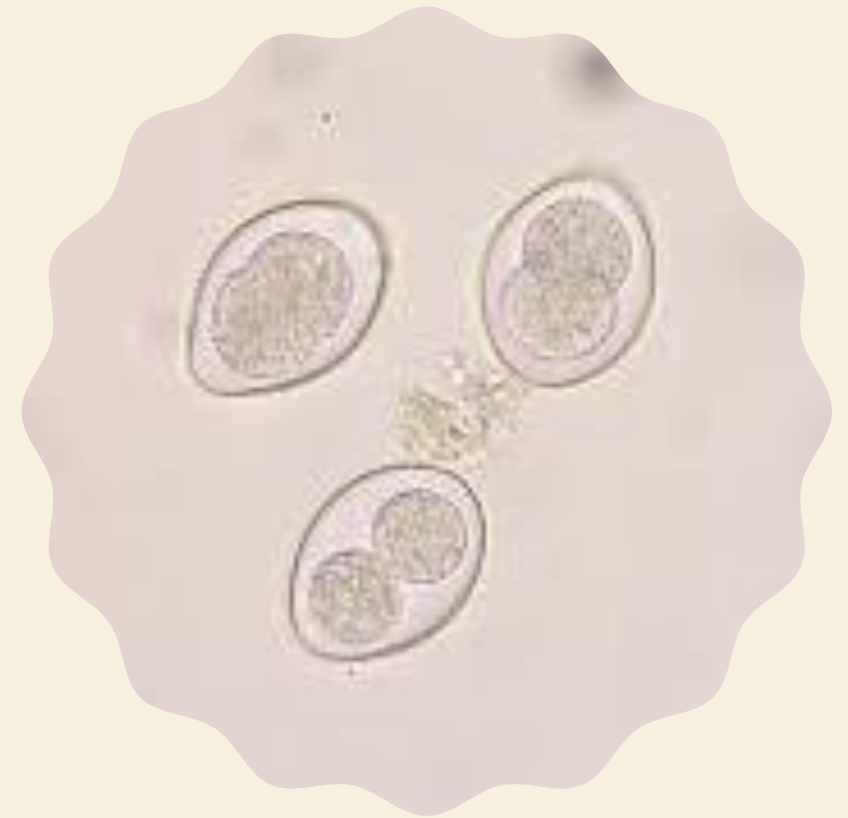
TOXOPLASMOSIS

- **Toxoplasma gondii** parasite, one of the world's most common parasites. Infection usually occurs by eating undercooked contaminated meat, exposure from infected cat feces.
- Inflammation
- Swollen glands
- Fever



COCCIDIOSIS

- A parasitic disease of the intestinal tract of animals caused by coccidian protozoa. The disease spreads from one animal to another by contact with infected feces or ingestion of infected tissue.





BESNOITIA

BESNOITIA IS A GENUS COMPRISED OF SEVERAL SPECIES OF PARASITIC, CYST FORMING, APICOMPLEXAN PROTOZOA THAT TYPICALLY INFECT THE SKIN, BLOOD VESSELS AND MUCOUS MEMBRANES.

BESNOITIOSIS IN VIRGINIA OPOSSUMS IS ATTRIBUTED TO INFECTION WITH BESNOITIA DARLINGI AND HAS BEEN REPORTED IN OPOSSUM.

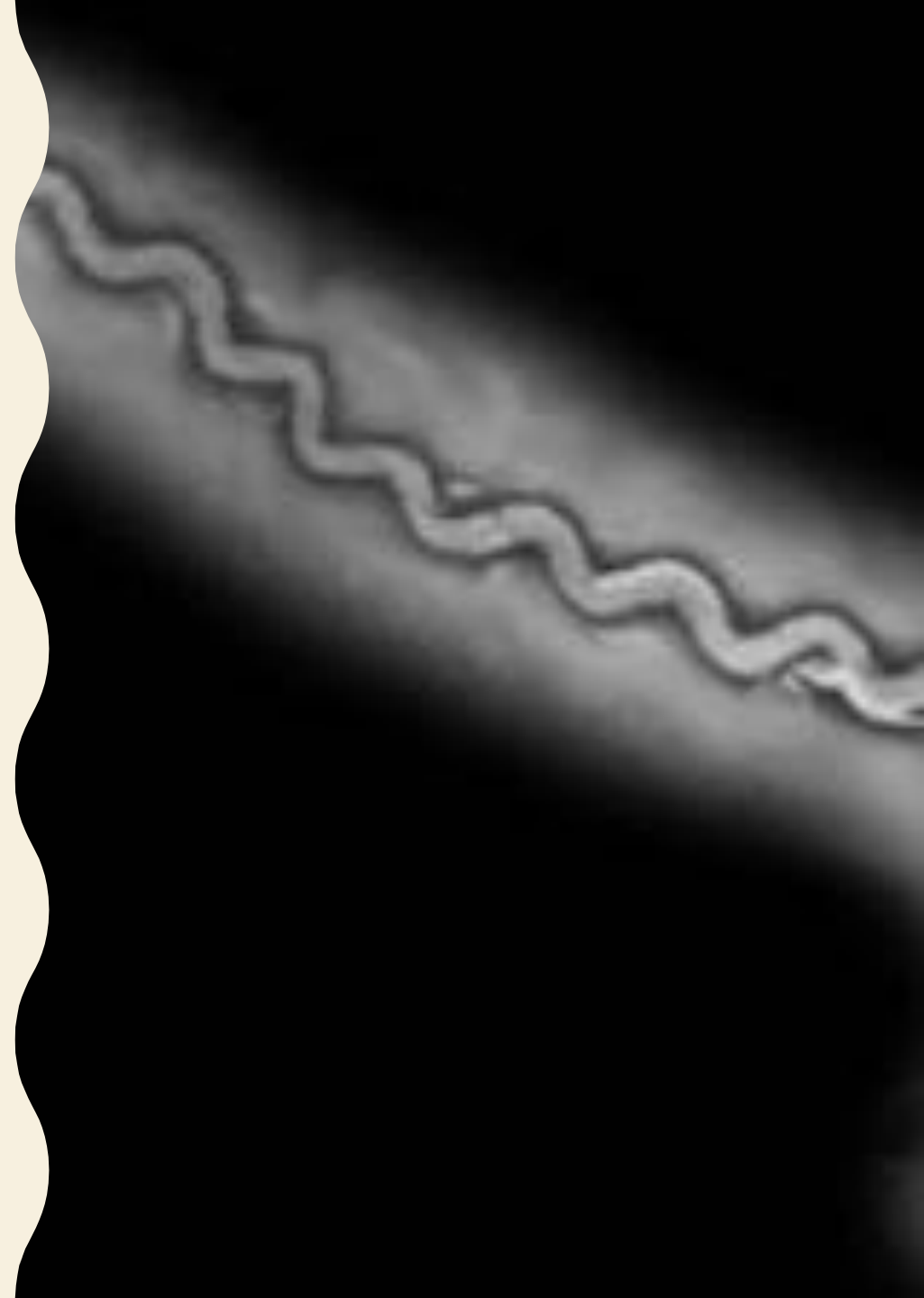
OPOSSUMS ARE AN INTERMEDIATE HOST AND CONSEQUENTLY DO NOT SHED OOCYSTS. BESNOITIOSIS TYPICALLY DOES NOT CAUSE SEVERE CLINICAL DISEASE IN OPOSSUMS DESPITE OFTEN WIDESPREAD DISSEMINATION OF TISSUE CYSTS.

HOWEVER, DEBILITATION AND DEATH OF SEVERELY AFFECTED OPOSSUMS HAS BEEN REPORTED.



LEPTOSPIROSIS

- A bacterial disease that starts off with flu-like symptoms. If left untreated, **leptospirosis** will cause kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, and respiratory complications. The disease is transmitted through the urine and feces.



ECTOPARASITES

FLEAS/MITES

- Opossums are known as flea reservoirs, meaning that fleas that have been feeding on opossums can then infest any other animal near.
 - Flea dirt
 - Dry crusty skin
 - Fur loss
 - Excessive scratching
 - Anemic
-
- Can use kitten frontline spray and pyrethrin's.



MAGGOTS

- The most common to see on wounds and orphaned joeys.
- Will need to be picked off individually with tweezers or forceps
- Shave the area if mass infestation
- Use Pyrethrin, sprayed on cloth and rub on the fur, if eggs are present.
- Check every two days for additional maggots and remove.



TICKS

Though this is very rare opossums can still get ticks when their overall health has been compromised.

- Using your fingers or a pair of forceps remove the tick
- Check the area for pinchers still imbedded in the flesh.
- Clean the area with a mixture of 10% betadine and 90% water.
- Observe the area for swelling and infection.



ENDOPARASITES



TAPE WORM

Tapeworms are flat, segmented worms that live in the intestines of some animals. Animals can become infected with these parasites when grazing in pastures or drinking contaminated water.

eggs, larvae, or segments from the tapeworm in stools.

vomiting.

nausea.

general weakness.

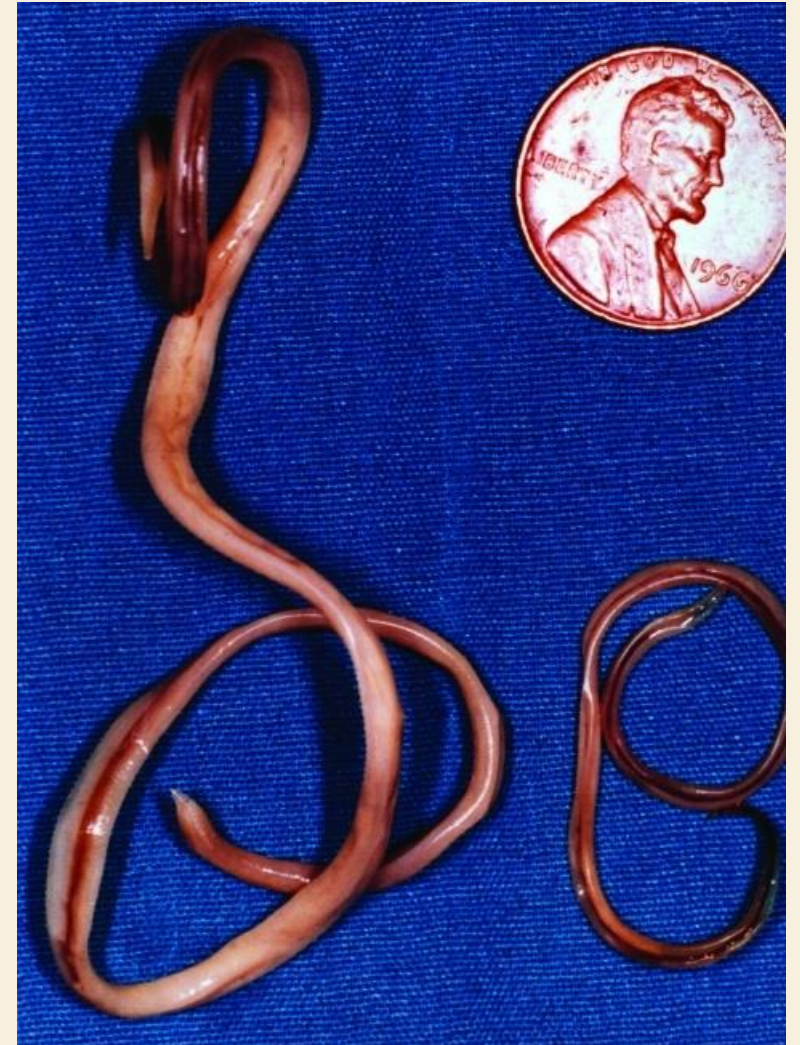
inflammation of the intestine.

diarrhea.

weight loss.

RACCOON ROUND WORM

- *Baylisascaris procyonis*, common name raccoon roundworm, is a roundworm nematode, found ubiquitously in raccoons, the definitive hosts.
- nausea.
- vomiting.
- irregular stools or diarrhea.
- intestinal blockage
- loss of appetite.
- weight loss.
- Loss of coordination
- Loss of muscle control
- blindness



HOOK WORM

- **Hookworm** infection is an infection by a type of intestinal parasite known as a **hookworm**. Initially, itching and a rash may occur at the site of infection. Those only affected by a few worms may show no symptoms.
- Tiredness
- Diarrhea
- Weight loss



Feature Picture Source: CDC / Dr. Mae Malvin

RAT LUNG WORM

- Rat lungworm is known to cause neurological disease in a range of species including dogs, wallabies, foxes and birds. Adult worms' dwell in the pulmonary arteries and right ventricle of rats. Larvae are shed in rat feces where they are ingested by intermediate hosts – most notably slugs and snails.
- Weight loss
- Nervous system
- Neurological



ASCARID

- A nematode worm known as the "small intestinal roundworms", which is a type of parasitic worm.
- **Coughing** and/or **wheezing**.
- Nausea.
- **Vomiting**.
- Passing roundworms and their eggs in the stool.
- fever



POISONING

LEAST COMMON INTAKE ISSUE

REACT QUICKLY

- If poison is suspected determine what the poison is and the ingredient(s). Treat any suspected poisonings immediately. For treatment options, contact your veterinarian or Poison Control. If available, take a sample of the suspected poison and/or the bag the product came into the veterinarian. Treatments may include administration of medications to absorb toxins in the stomach, an antidote, and supportive care.

PESTICIDES

Eye damage.

Fever.

Vomiting.

Diarrhea.

weight.

lethargic.

Seizures.

Muscle tremors.

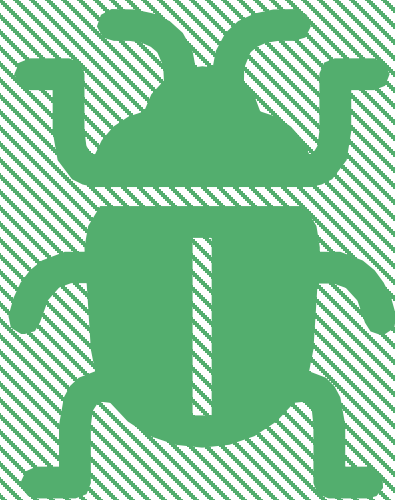
Animal Advocates Wildlife Rehabilitation
Wildlife with no eyes caused by pesticides



Normal squirrel, opossum eyes below



Please, help us help these animals by
donating to www.AnimalAdvocates.us



THANK YOU



KELSEY AND KARA