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On



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PROGRAM & ABSTRACT

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Observations On Pentastomiasis: A Parasitic Zoonosis Not Frequently Reported In Italy.

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In Umbria, two species of pentastomids have been recorded: Linguatula serrata Frohlich 1789 and Armillifer (Porocephalus) armillatus Wyman 1848. Both of them are occasionally present respectively in Canidae and in imported pythons and both, as larval stages, can produce human infections, collectively referred to as pentastomiasis. Human cases of infestation are in Italy very rare, but the great biological potential of these arthropods *which can contain more than 700.000 eggs) represents, anyhow, a potential danger for humans and greatly compensate the poor number of parasites usually observed on animals. In the last ten years only 12 cases of nasal linguatulosis in dogs and 23 cases of pulmonary porocephalosis in breded pythons have been diagnosed in our institute. In some of those cases, the infection has been revealed directly through the necroscopic examination; in some other cases the examination of nasal and oral secretions has been carried out to

search for embrionate eggs of parasites . Although the delivery of eggs is extremely irregular this method has turned out useful to diagnose the infestation quickly and to avoid its spreading and the environmental contamination. Pentastomid eggs have, in fact, a great resistance outside the host and can be incidentally swallowed by people, in which larvae, penetrated through intestine, can reach liver, spleen, lungs, lymph nodes, producing small granulomas (diameter about 1 cm. long). The examination of nasal secretions of dogs having one-sided drainage must raise suspicion of linguatulosis and lead to use caution in getting in touch with the animal infected. If the exam is positive, a double environmental treatment with organophosphorus compounds, together with an antiparasitic treatment, or , more simply, the use of hot steam has resulted to be efficacious.