HYDATIDOSIS IN A LION

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Echinococcus granulosus is a parasite in dogs, wolves and rarely occurs in other carnivores. The eggs are ingested by wild and domestic herbivores where they hatch. The oncospheres invade the circulatory system and lodge in various parts of the body especially in the liver and lungs. They develop into large cysts (hydatids) that bud scolices endogenously (Anonymous, 1986). Reports on hydatidosis in wild animals are scarce. The present paper reports a case of hydatidosis in a lion.

A 22-year-old lion belonging to Maharajbag Zoo, died after showing signs of illness for about 10 days. Cysts recovered from the lungs of the lion were examined to identify the parasite.

On postmortem examination, congestion of conjunctiva, heart, lungs, kidneys and engorged sub-cutaneous blood vessels were observed. The liver was severely congested with large number of hydatid cysts (from a size of a lemon drop to tennis ball). Stomach showed mucosal erosions and the intestinal blood vessels were engorged. Blood smear did not reveal any infection. The cysts contained large amount of fluid and protoscolices that showed vigorous movement of sucker and rostellum. The liver was severely congested with large number of hydatid cysts. However, the exact route of acquiring the infection of E. granulosus by the lion could not be ascertained.

In the present case, the lion died after illness of about 10 days and necropsy revealed liver dysfunction due to large number of hydatid cysts of varying sizes. However, the exact route of acquiring the infection of E. granulosus by the lion could not be ascertained.

References


