Health & Diseases Terms Glossary: Reptiles

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There is a wealth of jargon used throughout the reptile world. This is especially true when discussing reptile health and diseases. Learning this vocabulary allows you to better understand articles and what veterinarians, reptile hobbyists and other reptile owners are saying. The following list of terms, while in no way comprehensive, contains some of the terms used to discuss reptile health and diseases.

Ectoparasite

A parasite that lives on the skin or surface of a reptile. "Ecto" means outside.

Endoparasite

A parasite that lives in a reptile; generally pose a significantly higher risk to a herp than ectoparasites. "Endo" means inside.

Hypercalcemia

A condition where a reptile has an abnormally elevated blood calcium level.

Hypocalcemia

A condition where a reptile has an abnormally low blood calcium level; also referred to as calcium deficiency.

Metabolic bone disease

A disease linked to calcium deficiency; affected reptiles suffer malformation and softening of bones, deformed shells, and other serious problems.

Salmonella

Bacteria that cause Salmonellosis; carried in the intestinal tract of almost all reptiles and shed through their feces.

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