Death from Liver Flukes: A Fluke?
The liver fluke, *Platynosomun concinnum*, parasitizes the hepatobiliary tract of domestic cats. The fluke’s second intermediate hosts, a variety of lizards and the marine toad, are most likely to infect cats. The infective stages migrate into the gallbladder and bile ducts of cats. In this report, 3 cats, which were 5, 10, and 11 years of age, developed severe disease from liver flukes. Two of the cats were allowed outside, but 1 was strictly an indoor cat. The cats in this report had a fairly acute onset of clinical signs, which included vomiting, anorexia, lethargy, and jaundice. Serum biochemistry profiles and abdominal ultrasonography were suggestive of extrahepatic biliary obstruction. Infection with liver flukes was confirmed by cytologic evaluation of intraoperative bile. Flukes were also found through histopathologic evaluation of the liver in the 2 cats from which samples were collected. All 3 cats were euthanized during the postsurgical period because of complications. They may have had cumulative or recurring infection, resulting in a high burden of parasites over a longer period and thus more serious disease than that reported in experimentally infected cats that remained asymptomatic. Prophylactic treatment of liver flukes has been suggested, but no studies have been done to evaluate efficacy.

**COMMENTARY:** Cats with hepatobiliary disease that live or have lived in enzootic areas should be evaluated for liver flukes. The disease is typically seen in tropical and subtropical climates, such as Florida, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. Diagnostic methods include liver biopsy, cytologic evaluation of bile aspirate, and fecal examination. Trematode eggs typically do not float with regular flotation methods, so sedimentation of feces is necessary. The best method to prevent disease is to prevent cats from hunting and eating the intermediate hosts, although one cat in this study was kept strictly indoors.—*The Editors*