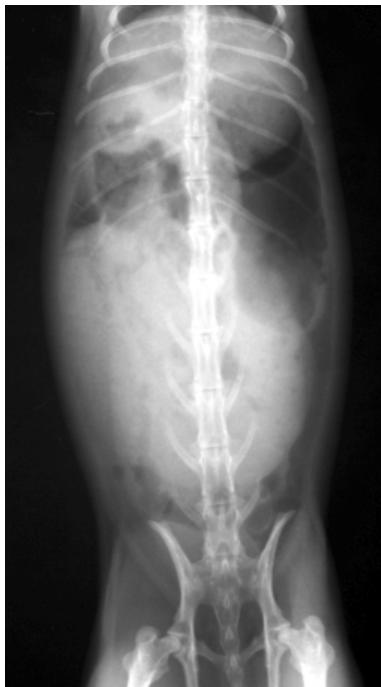


## WHAT IS YOUR DIAGNOSIS

Pranee Tuntivanich Suwicha Chuthatep



(A)



(A)

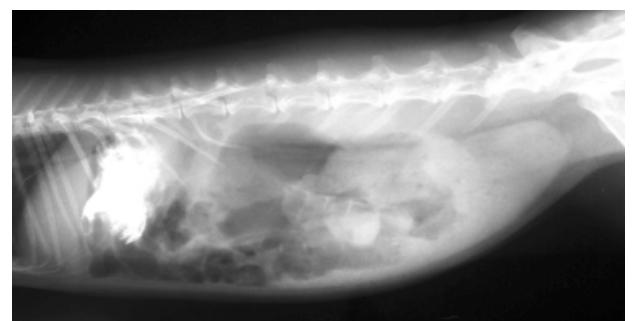


(B)

**Figure 1** A. Plain ventrodorsal abdominal radiograph  
B. Plain lateral abdominal radiograph

### History :

A 3 year-old male rabbit was presented after a week long history of anorexia, abdominal distension and weight loss. Throughout this period the rabbit had seemed bright and happy. The owner also noted that the rabbit had a reduced faecal output. The rabbit's coat was dry and had a dull appearance. A small-abdominal mass approximately



(B)

**Figure 2** A. Ventrodorsal abdominal radiograph with barium  
B. Lateral abdominal radiograph with barium

2 cm in diameter was detected during abdominal palpation.

Both the ventrodorsal and lateral plain radiographs were taken before the barium sulfate swallow studies were performed.

Give your diagnosis and turn to the next page.

## Radiographic Diagnosis

Gastric Hairball (Trichobezoar)

## Radiographic Findings and Comments

The stomach of this rabbit was distended and contained a well-delineated, homogenous soft tissue structure in the gastric body outlined by air (Figure 1. A, B). The small intestines were gas filled. There was a large amount of faeces in the colon. The radiographs from the positive contrast study, and the barium sulfate gastrogram, clearly showed a foreign body (Figure 2. A, B). The diagnosis was presumptive and was supported by the history of anorexia and the dull wool appearance. The mass represented a gastric hairball or trichobezoar.

Treatment was centered on correcting the dehydration and re-establishing normal gut function. The rabbit was rehydrated and enteral protectants were administered. Administration of metaclopramide (0.3 mg/kg SQ every 8 hours) helped to stimulate peristalsis, and will often stimulate the rabbit's appetite. Past recommendations of feeding fresh pineapple juice, at 10 to 15 ml orally, once or twice daily for 5 days could provide an energy source but it is unclear whether the cellulitic activity of the papain eliminates the hairball. Force feeding of pulverized food, in water or yogurt, may help stimulate the appetite. Diets high in plant fiber have dramatically reduced the incidence of this clinical syndrome.