

Jadzia the Veiled Chameleon:

Jadzia was presented because she had become a little unsteady when she was walking along the branches in her vivarium and had fallen a couple of times. Her owner was worried that, although they had only bought her two weeks previously, she might have eggs and be waiting to lay them. She was bright and eating but Vicki was also concerned she could feel eggs in her abdomen (usually referred to as a coelom in birds, reptiles and frogs because they don't have a diaphragm to separate their abdomen from their chest) so she took an X-ray. This showed that Jadzia did have eggs or follicles (the stage before the eggs are formed) in her coelom but she also had poor bone density.

Many reptiles are susceptible to poor bone density (known as metabolic bone disease) if they don't get enough vitamin D3 in their diet and/or don't get enough exposure to UV-B light. When female reptiles prepare to lay eggs, they use their reserves of calcium from their bones to form eggshells so this can worsen the condition.

Jadzia was stabilised by starting her on oral calcium supplementation but didn't proceed to lay her eggs as she should. As her owner didn't want to breed from her, it was decided to spay her once she was stable so that she didn't become ill again.



The surgery showed that she was in follicular stasis – this is where the animal prepares to form eggs by producing lots of follicles on their ovaries (these go on to form the 'yolk' of the egg). They can become stuck in this phase of their cycle and the ovaries expand to a massive size, reducing the amount of space available for the animal's lungs and digestive tract. This can affect their breathing and reduce their appetite.



Jadzia had an ovariectomy (her ovaries were removed) – you can see how big these were on the picture!!



This gave her internal organs the space they needed to function normally and she went on to make a good recovery.