

# IMPROBABLE MEDICAL REVIEW

*Improbable diagnoses, techniques, and research*

compiled by Bertha Vanatian, Improbable Research staff

## Bee, and Not to Be: Paragliding Death on the Tip of His Tongue

“A Fatal Case of Anaphylactic Shock During Paragliding,” Paolo Feltracco, Stefania Barbieri, Helmut Galligioni, Laura Pasin, Rosa Maria Gaudio, Aurelio Tommasi, Alessandro Zucchetto, Paride Trevisiol, Carlo Ori, and Francesco Maria Avato, *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, vol. 57, no. 6, November 2012, pp. 1656–8. (Thanks to Dan Vergano for bringing this to our attention.) The authors, at University Hospital of Padova, Italy, and related institutions, report:

This case presentation reports on a paraglider pilot, who was seen spinning “unusually” rapidly toward the ground, without visible attempts to regain control of the aircraft. Besides the bilateral mydriasis and the absence of any ECG activity, there was a significant swelling of face, lips, neck, and tongue. Upon opening the mouth, a dead bee was found over the tongue, underneath the palate. A fatal anaphylactic shock was the likely cause of death of the pilot while still “in mid-air.” This case is certainly different from the commonly reported accidents during paragliding.

### A Fatal Case of Anaphylactic Shock During Paragliding

**ABSTRACT:** The growth in popularity of flying ultralight aircraft and paragliding has been associated with an increased involvement of Emergency Medical Services because of various types of trauma suffered from both inexperienced and skilled individuals. This case presentation reports on a paraglider pilot, who was seen spinning “unusually” rapidly toward the ground, without visible attempts to regain control of the aircraft. Besides the bilateral mydriasis and the absence of any ECG activity, there was a significant swelling of face, lips, neck, and tongue. Upon opening the mouth, a dead bee was found over the tongue, underneath the palate. A fatal anaphylactic shock was the likely cause of death of the pilot while still “in mid-air.” This case is certainly different from the commonly reported accidents during paragliding.



FIG. 1—Swelling of face, neck, eyelids, lips, and tongue at arrival of the Helicopter Rescue Team.

Detail from the study “A Fatal Case of Anaphylactic Shock During Paragliding.”

## Carrots, Carrots, Carrots, in a Man

“Carrot Man: A Case of Excessive Beta-Carotene Ingestion,” Randy A. Sansone and Lori A. Sansone, *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, epub March 19, 2012. The authors, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, report:

The authors describe a 48-year-old male who complained to his primary care physician of abdominal discomfort and yellow/orange skin discoloration.... Upon further questioning, the patient reported ingesting 6–7 pounds of carrots per week to facilitate his dieting effort. The patient was diagnosed with constipation, hypercarotinemias, and possible vitamin A toxicity.

## Carrots, Carrots, Carrots, in a Rabbit

“Hyperostotic Polyarthropathy in a Rabbit: A Suspected Case of Chronic Hypervitaminosis A from a Diet of Carrots,” J.L. Frater, *Australian Veterinary Journal*, vol. 79, no. 9, 2001, pp. 608–11. (Thanks to investigator Kurt Verkest for bringing this to our attention.) The author, at the University of Melbourne, reports:

“Chronic hypervitaminosis A can occur in many species after excessive dietary intake of Vitamin A (retinol).... This case report describes a probable case of naturally occurring hypervitaminosis A-induced polyarthropathy in a rabbit after chronic ingestion of a diet made up almost exclusively of carrots.... A syndrome of naturally occurring hypervitaminosis A-induced polyarthropathy has not been described in a rabbit before.”

### Hyperostotic polyarthropathy in a rabbit - a suspected case of chronic hypervitaminosis A from a diet of carrots

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Chronic hypervitaminosis A can occur in many species after excessive dietary intake of Vitamin A (retinol). The most common presentation of chronic hypervitaminosis A is a polyarthropathy with hyperostosis and ankylosis of various joints. This case report describes a probable case of naturally occurring hypervitaminosis A-induced polyarthropathy in

#### Case report

A 4.5-year-old male mixed-breed rabbit was presented with a 2-day history of lameness in the left hind limb. On clinical examination the rabbit was in good condition, vital signs were normal, and there were no significant findings except for a swollen and painful left hock. There was no history of trauma.

We welcome your suggestions for this and other columns. Please enclose the full citation (no abbreviations!) and, if possible, a copy of the paper:

