

Shelly the Sea Turtle's Parasite Predicament

Did you know veterinarians count things we can't see? Using microscopes, they can see cells we can't with our own eyes. The Sea Turtle Healing Center sometimes gets sea turtles with internal parasites, which are found inside the digestive tract. Veterinarians have to use a microscope to look at a turtle's poop, also called a "fecal," to check for parasite eggs! Having some parasites can be normal for sea turtles, but too many can make them very sick and require medication to make them healthy again.

Below is a fecal sample from a sea turtle patient named Shelly. Can you figure out if Shelly needs medication by counting the parasite eggs from this sample? Look closely to be sure not to count plant material, or you might get the wrong number! Use the grid lines to help track your counts for each square.

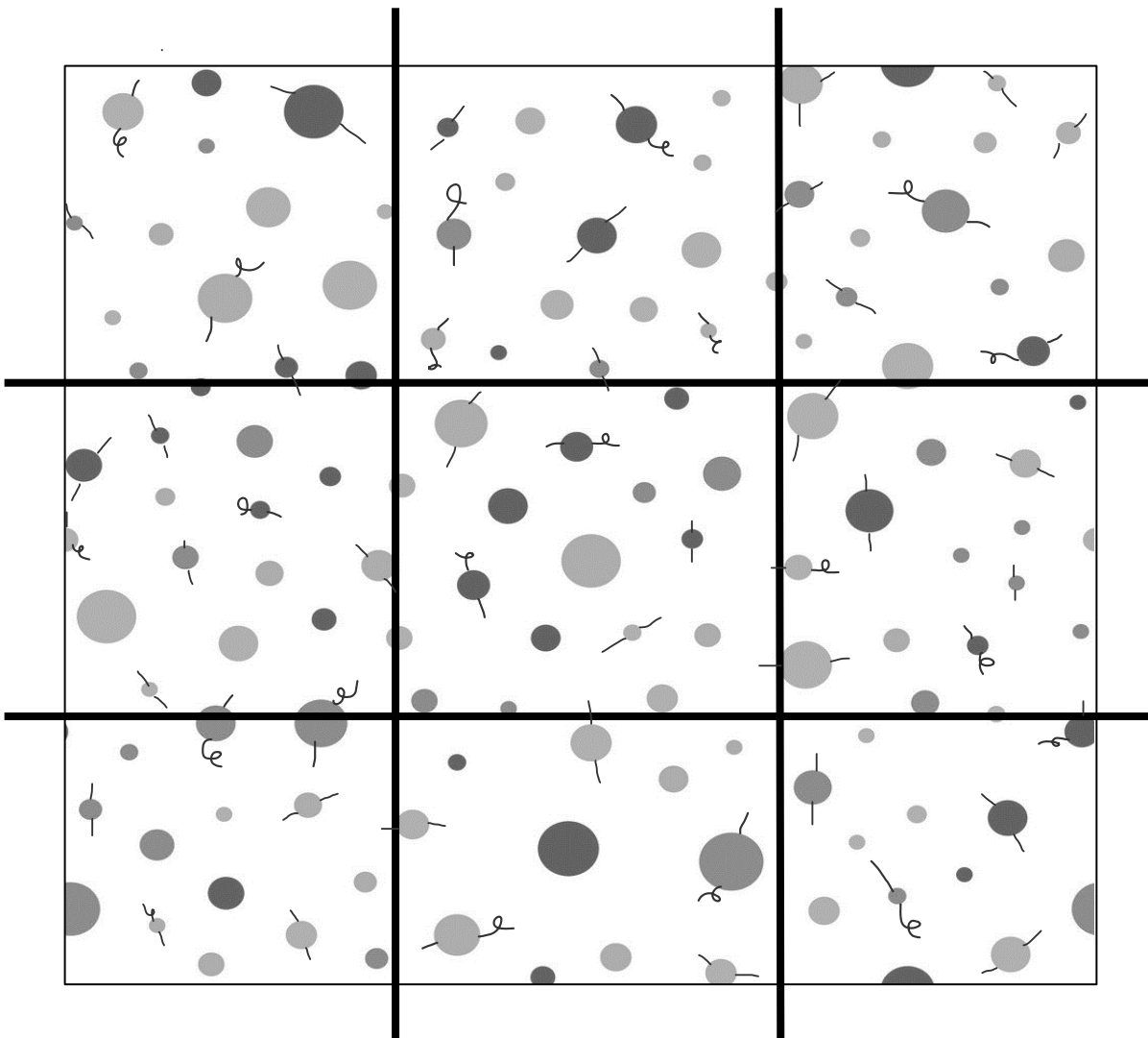
Parasite Egg: Any Color or Size

Plant Material: Any Color or Size

1 curly line
1 straight line



2 straight lines
or no lines



<u># of Parasite Eggs:</u>	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<u>Treat with Medication:</u>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

How many parasite eggs did you count? _____ Does Shelly need medication? _____

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ANSWERS BELOW

Parasite Egg Count: 21 – Shelly Needs Medication