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### **MONSTROUS DOLPHINS - Malformations in Marine Mammals.**

Most reproductive failures in aquatic creatures are lost to study, unless the animals thrive in captivity. The base incidence of malformations therefore is unknown and the discovery of unusual anomalies may or may not be significant. In the Southwest Fisheries Center of NOAA collection of dolphin embryos, fetuses and adults obtained from inadvertent kills on tuna boats, we have obtained several most unusual specimens: (1) Severe caudal regression; (2) Megalencephaly; (3) Omphalocele; (4) Cleft mandible and hypoplasia of maxilla; (5) Monozygotic twins. These are well-described in the literature of teratology in land mammals. Caudal regression syndrome is known to be associated with maternal diabetes mellitus, megalencephaly with a variety of metabolic disorders as well as an isolated finding. Cleft mandible with midfacial hypoplasia, omphalocele and identical twins are apparently chance events. Considering the state of contamination of the oceans, and knowing that these dolphins all were taken from the same general area in the tropical Pacific, it may be possible in future to link these findings with some xenobiotic contaminants. The role of delayed implantation in the production of monozygotic twinning has to be clarified.

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