**Figure 2**

**Leydig cells and apical stratum of *A. mexicanum* (H&E)**

**4 months 24 months 48 months**

**DSH**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| **VSH** |  |  |
| **DST/F** |  |  |
| **VST/F** |  |  |
| **CRS** |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**VST**

**H&E stain**. Dorsal skin of the head (**DSH**), Ventral skin of the head (**VSH**), Dorsal skin of the trunk at the forelimb level (**DST/F**), Ventral skin of the trunk at the forelimb level (**VST/F**), Caudal ridge skin (**CRS**) and Ventral skin of the tail (**VST**). The scale bar in the photomicrographs represents 25 µm. The age of each specimen is indicated in each column. In the 4-month-old axolotl, the DSH region contains LCs with some eosinophilic cytoplasmic granules (**yellow** **arrows**), while the VSH, DST/F, and VST/F regions show LCs with eosinophilic cytoplasm but no granules (**circles**). The CRS and VST regions lack these staining patterns. A basophilic layer is observed over the apical stratum in the DSH, VSH, DST/F, and VST regions (**black arrows**). At 24 months, LCs exhibit abundant eosinophilic cytoplasmic granules (**yellow arrows**), tending towards apical morphological polarization. In the 48-month-old axolotl, some LCs display eosinophilic granules (**yellow arrows**), but most contain numerous basophilic granules (**red arrows**). Other LCs maintain the eosinophilic cytoplasmic appearance observed in the 4-month-old specimen (**circles**). Notably, the cutaneous VST region lacks LCs. All epidermal strata contain elongated or rounded cells with clear, granule-free cytoplasm.