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Dystocia due to fetal anasarca in sheep: A case report

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Abstract

A full term crossbred doe, aged 3 years and weighing around 23 kg was presented to TVCC, Veterinary College, hebbal (KVAFSU) with the anamnesis stating animal's inability to deliver the fetus, persistent straining accompanied by restlessness and anorexia. The doe recovered uneventfully after subsequent treatment with systemic antimicrobial therapy for 4 days. In conclusion, a case of dystocia due to fetal anasarca and its successful management through caesarean section is reported below.

Keywords: Fetal anasarca, cesarean section, fetal monster, schistosomus reflexus, perosomus elumbis, fetal anasarca, foetal ascites and chodroplastic monsters

Introduction

Dystocia, or difficult childbirth, occurs more often in sheep than in goats (Hanie, 2006 and Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 2015) [2, 1]. Ewes that are first weaned or have a single fetus are more prone to dystocia (Jackson, 2004) [4]. Anasarca is a common bloated body condition that has been reported less frequently in small ruminants. Fetal ducksarc is a general release of water from the subcutaneous tissue of the fetus. Fetal monsters occur when harmful factors disrupt the fetus in early development, these harmful elements are mostly genetic in origin, but may also include physical, chemical, and viral agents (Jackson, 2004) [4]. A fetal monster usually takes significant physical damage that disfigures its appearance, but may not cause its death in the womb. Different types of monsters and congenital anomalies in farm animals described in the literature include identical twins, Schistosomus reflexus, perosomus elumbis, hydrocephalus, fetal ascites and codroplastic monsters (Arthur *et al.*, 1996) [5]. This article describes a case of dystocia caused by fetal anasarca (ie general swelling of the body) and its successful resolution by caesarean section in sheep.

Case History and Clinical Observation

There was a history of excessive bilateral abdominal distension since 15 days. The doe was anorectic and showing mild degree of rectal prolapse from one last week. The doe was in advanced stage of gestation but exact date of mating was unknown.

Clinical examination revealed extensive bilateral abdominal distention with mucus hanging from the external genitalia and mild rectal prolapse. The dog was lethargic, did not want to move, had severe breathing problems and had a tendency to sit. Direct temperature was 102.8°F. During palpation of the abdomen, the fetus or fetal parts could not be palpated due to the severely distended abdomen and the discomfort of the deer. Vaginal examination revealed cervical enlargement of one finger. Due to the woman's poor health, it was decided to perform a caesarean section immediately.

Treatment and Discussion

The doe was restrained in right lateral recumbency and caesarean section was performed by oblique ventrolateral approach. Excessive amniotic fluid was drained out slowly. One dead female fetus were removed. Examination of the fetuses revealed one anasarca fetus with comparative shortened forelimbs associated with edematous face and ears indicating "bulldog" monster fetus. As the doe was normal and alert post-surgery, thus was discharged together with medicinal therapy including 3 ml Enrofloxacin (Enrocin® Vetnex Animal Health Ltd, New Delhi, India), 3 ml Meloxicam (Melonex® Intas). The anasarca fetus can be relieved by forced traction however; caesarean section is required in severe cases or fetal monstrosities (Philips, 2012) [3].

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Pictures



Fig 1: Anasarca fetus of sheep



Fig 2: C-section in sheep

Conclusion

Dystocia should be considered as an emergency condition in ruminants that requires immediate intervention. The stage of the clinical presentation and condition of the animal is important in deciding the prognosis. Since the condition is having multifactorial etiology i.e. nutritional, physiological, and genetic factors, the treatment should be directed to resolve all these factors. Furthermore, the dystocia in goat due to congenital anomalies like anasarca is not a specific and common condition in goat but has potential complication for dam.

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