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A case report of foetal maceration due to uterine torsion in a Mecheri sheep

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Abstract

The present communication reports the pervaginal delivery of macerated fetus due to uterine torsion and its successful management in a Mecheri ewe.

Keywords: Mecheri sheep, uterine torsion, foetal maceration, pervaginal delivery

Introduction

Twisting or revolution of uterus in on its longitudinal axis is called as uterine torsion and its incidence were mostly reported during last part of the pregnancy (Selvaraju *et al.*, 2011) but its occurrence rare in small ruminants (Selvaraju *et al.*, 2020) [7] due to sublumbar attachment of the broad ligament (Parkinson *et al.*, 2019) [2]. In small ruminants incidences of uterine torsion most oftenly undiagnosed and post cervical uterine torsion only possible to detect (Periyannan *et al.*, 2020) [7]. Delayed diagnosis and treatment of uterine torsion may accomplish with fetal death and microbial contamination which may lead fetal emphysema, maceration and septicaemia with death of the dam (Selvaraju *et al.*, 2011). Hence, the present paper reports maceration due to delayed diagnosis of uterine torsion in a Mecheri sheep.

Case history and clinical observation

Owner brought the Mecheri sheep on its 4th lambing to the Veterinary Clinical Complex, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal with the history of full term pregnant, intermittent abdominal straining, foul smelling vaginal discharge and with tucked up udder. Further, owner reported that three days before the case was diagnosed as improper cervical dilatation and the parturition was induced by field veterinarian. On clinical examination the ewe appeared depressed, walked with a stiff and stilted gait and the physiological parameters were within the normal range. Vaginal examination revealed right side twist on cephalic portion of the vagina about 180°. Based on vaginal examination the case was diagnosed as post-cervical right ride peripartum uterine torsion.

Treatment and Discussion

The confirmation of post-cervical right ride peripartum uterine torsion was made by vaginal examination and it was decided to detort the uterus by modified Schaffer's method. The ewe was cast on right lateral recumbency, both the fore limbs and hind limbs were secured separately. A 6 feet length, ½ feet width and 1 inch thickness wooden plank was fixed over flank region by one man palm pressure (Fig. 1) and torsion was completely relieved after the two successive rotations. The vaginal examination after the detorsion revealed absence of vaginal twist and the three finger dilatation of cervix with soft consistency. Then manual dilatation of the cervix was attempted by fanning and feathering 30 minutes after the intravenous infusion of inj. Dextrose 25% (150 ml) and calcium borogluconate (50 ml). Finally, dead macerated fetus with foul smelling discharge was removed from the uterus by simple traction (Fig. 2). After the removal the ewe was treated with inj. Ceftriaxone 500mg, inj. Chlorpheniramine maleate 10 mg, Tribivet 2.5 ml, Flunixin 50 mg and inj. Oxytocin 10 IU intramuscularly and 2 no. of Bol. Uromet was placed in uterus. The animal was treated for another three days with above mentioned prescription except oxytocin and intrauterine bolus and the treated animal was completely recovered 8 days after the day of admission.

Fetal maceration also called as septic metritis of pregnancy and it is more frequently reported in larger ruminants than the other farm animals, the most probable reason is undeliverable

abortion after the third month of the gestation in cow and buffalo (Manokaran *et al.*, 2012) ^[1]. Futile expulsion of aborted fetus may lead to fetal emphysema and maceration of the fetus due to microbial contamination (Prakash *et al.*, 2016) and other factors related to the maceration is artificial insemination during pregnancy, deficiency and poor managemental practices (Palanisamy *et al.*, 2014) ^[5]. This condition is routinely diagnosed by vaginal and rectal examination, the treatment, prognosis and future breeding of the affected animal is most often unfavourable (Roberts, 1974). Recent literatures state that incidence of fetal maceration in sheep and due to delayed diagnosis and treatment of uterine torsion in sheep is rare.



Fig 1: Detorsion by modified Schaffer's method



Fig 2: Dead macerated fetus delivered after detorsion

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