

# FOETAL MACERATION DUE TO UTERINE TORSION IN A CROSS BRED COW

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Foetal maceration may occur at any stage of gestation and has been reported to occur in all species (Roberts, 1971). Foetal maceration occurs following foetal death, regression of corpus luteum and failure of abortion (Arthur *et al.*, 1989). Similarly, uterine torsion associated with foetal maceration followed by a caesarian in a cow was reported by Behl *et al.* (2004). The present communication puts on record, a case of foetal maceration due to imperfect cervical dilatation after administration of PGF<sub>2</sub>α.

A four years old full term pregnant jersey cross bred cow was brought to the Veterinary College Hospital, Namakkal with the history of having been treated with PGF<sub>2</sub>α after relieving of uterine torsion, ten days back by a local veterinarian. The owner further reported to have observed reddish brown watery foul smelling discharge from the vagina, since five days with no progression in parturition.

Clinical examination revealed swollen vulva with subnormal temperature (36.2°C), elevated pulse and respiration. Vaginal examination revealed hard and partially dilated cervix. Rectal examination revealed a contracted uterus lying on the pelvic brim, distended with thickening of uterine wall and crepitating mass of foetus. The case was diagnosed to be of foetal maceration. Efforts to deliver the foetus per vaginam was futile due to improper cervical dilation and hence, it was decided to perform caesarean section.

The operative site was prepared for aseptic surgery and right side laparotomy was performed under local infiltration anesthesia with 2% Lignocaine hydrochloride. On surgical exploration the uterus revealed presence of foetal bones and decomposed muscles lagged inspissated in it (Fig.1). After removal of the foetal bones and

decomposed mass, the uterus was exposed as much as possible and cleaned with diluted povidone iodine solution and all fluid accumulated in the uterus was siphoned out with help of suction pump. The cut edges of uterus were inverted with Cushing's suture using no.2 chromic catgut. Before closing, 5 gm of Streptopenicillin was infused into the peritoneal cavity. The abdomen and skin incision were closed by routine standard procedures and treated with fluids, antihistaminic and parental antibiotic. In spite of the prompt treatment recovery of the dam was unsuccessful.

Uterine torsion associated with lysis of corpus luteum may lead to foetal maceration. The dead foetus and open cervix at the body temperature cause a rapid invasion of the foetus and membranes by the organisms already present in the uterus or from the more caudal portion of the reproductive tract. Caesarean section should be considered as a last resort in valuable cow otherwise slaughter is recommended (Roberts, 1971). Even though the prognosis was poor it was decided to perform a caesarean section purely for diagnostic purpose.

It is concluded that the caesarian section should be performed immediately in the failure of expulsion of foetus within 72 hours after administration of PGF<sub>2</sub>α. The longer the condition had existed the greater the damage to the endometrium and the poorer the prognosis otherwise humane slaughter is recommended.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are thankful to the Dean, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal

for the facility provided to perform the operation.

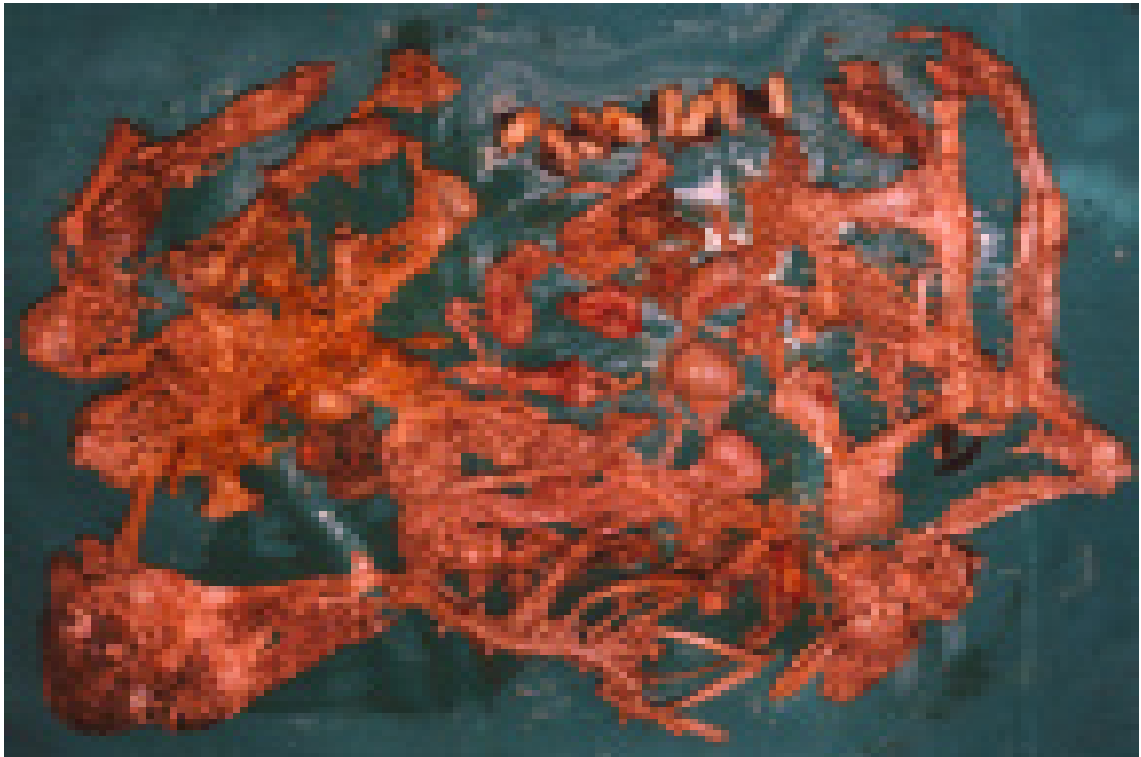
Journal. 81:1042-1043.

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Macerated foetus