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Caesarian Section on Chinchillas

Allen Metz*

Caesarian section is one of the most common surgical procedures in chinchillas. The main indications are oversized feti, closed or immature cervix, monstrosities, mummified feti, dead or putrified feti, and malpositioning.

Ether is the anesthetic of choice since it is safe in the chinchilla and gives no side effects. Two surgical approaches can be used, the abdominal median line and the flank. The abdominal wall on the median line is thin compared to the flank wall and is also exposed to more weight from the viscera. Only the flank approach will be discussed.

With the chinchilla on its left side, prepare an area in the right flank area. A $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch skin incision is made $\frac{1}{2}$ the distance between the costal arch and the tuber coxae and parallel to the costal arch. The skin and muscle layers are very thin and very little pressure is needed to go through them with the scalpel.

Using a finger, reach in and bring the gravid uterine horn up to the incision and make a $1\frac{1}{4}$ " incision into the uterus, avoiding the blood vessels. A gravid chinchilla uterus is nearly transparent, so care must

be used not to incise the fetus' skin. The fetus (or feti) is (or are) then removed and the umbilical cord is clamped and severed. If the placenta can be removed, it should be taken out. If not, leave it in and re-examine a day later, using one milligram diethylstilbesterol to expel the retained placentas.

The uterus should be sutured with 000 chromic catgut using a swaged-on needle and a Lembert suture pattern. The peritoneum and muscular layer can be closed with the same suture material using simple interrupted sutures about $\frac{1}{8}$ " apart. The surgeon can then do the same thing with the strong fascia and fat, if desired. Furacin or Polyotic can then be sprinkled on the area and the skin closed with a nylon or a fine synthetic protein suture material with interrupted sutures $\frac{1}{8}$ " apart.

The animal should then be held up by the tail to let the uterine horns find their normal position. If the anesthetic is properly administered the animal should be able to nuzzle the young in five to ten minutes.

REFERENCE

Chinchilla Caesarian Section by Bernard Koch, DVM in Chinchilla Fur Farming Series, April, 1962.

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