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A Retained Placenta in a Mare

D. W. Simonsen*
Class of 1940

On Feb. 20, 1940, a nine year old Percheron mare was admitted to the Iowa State College Veterinary Clinic. The mare had aborted nine hours previous to her admission to the clinic and was suffering from retention of fetal membranes.

The clinical symptoms were those of restlessness and mild straining. The fetal membranes protruding from the vulva extended to the mare’s hocks. All but six inches of the placenta protruding from the vulva was removed.

Upon examining the uterus, the membranes were found to be closely adherent and could only be separated from the uterine mucosa with difficulty. The detachment was attended by hemorrhage and the manipulations resulted in violent straining. It was noted that a partial telescoping of the involved uterine horn was taking place. It was decided to give up further effort at removal of the membranes for the time being.

A stomach tube was passed through the nose into the trachea to prevent straining while warm Therapogen solution was injected into the uterus and siphoned away for the purpose of removing the hemorrhage and with the hope that it would at the same time help to correct the threatened eversion. The tube was removed and an ounce of chloral hydrate was given per orum in an attempt to overcome the restlessness and straining. The mare was then placed in a roomy box stall.

It was only a few minutes until the mare assumed a recumbent position and the continued straining soon resulted in an eversion of the uterus. She was returned to the stocks and the detached portions of the fetal membranes were removed. The uterus was cleaned with warm Therapogen solution and with some difficulty returned to the abdominal cavity. The slightest manipulation of the mucosa of the everted organ resulted in pronounced hemorrhage. It was evident that the uterus could not be kept in position unless the straining could be controlled. Chloral anesthesia was decided upon and the mare was returned to her stall. The drug was administered intravenously until anesthesia was complete. The one ounce of chloral given per orum had produced considerable incoordination but it required nearly two ounces more per vein before she went down; two additional ounces completed the anesthesia. With the animal under complete control warm Therapogen solution was injected into the uterine cavity for the purpose of dilating the horns and thus encouraging the displaced parts to return to their normal position. After all the solution had been siphoned away two capsules of equal parts boric acid and iodoform were inserted into the uterus.

Fearing that straining might recur when the anesthesia wore off the vulva was sutured with heavy tape to prevent, if possible, a recurrence of the eversion. Two hours later the mare was again on her feet but showed no further evidence of straining.

On the morning of Feb. 21, the mare was very listless, had a temperature of 103.4°, and a pulse of 96. The tape sutures were removed from the vulva and one ounce of sulfanilamide was given per orum.

An examination of the uterus the following morning revealed the remainder of the placenta was still firmly attached. Considerable involution of the uterus had occurred. The mare’s temperature was 102.4° and her pulse was 90. Two No. 10 capsules of a mixture of sodium perborate and iodoform (sodium perborate two parts, iodoform one part) were placed in the horns of the uterus. One ounce of sulfanilamide was given per orum.

The mare was very depressed and the

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respirations were slow and labored on the morning of Feb. 23. Her pulse was 90 and her temperature 103°. The uterus was irrigated with two percent warm Therapogen solution and most of the retained membrane was loose enough to be removed. Two No. 10 capsules of sodium perborate and boric acid (sodium perborate two parts, boric acid one part) were placed in the horns of the uterus. Three drams of fluid extract of digitalis were given per os.

The mare seemed somewhat better on the morning of Feb. 24. The temperature had dropped to 100.3°; the pulse was 65 and quite strong. Two percent Therapogen was used to irrigate the uterus; it was found that the remaining shreds of placenta had become detached. Two No. 10 capsules of sodium perborate and boric acid similar to those mentioned above were placed in the uterus.

On Sunday morning, Feb. 25, the mare was alert, her temperature was 100.4°, and her pulse 60. No treatment was given.

The following morning the uterus of the mare was examined and found to be involuting normally. There was only a small amount of fluid exudate in the uterus. Her pulse and temperature were normal. Two percent Therapogen was used to irrigate the uterus. The animal was discharged, apparently well on the road to recovery.

On March 10, the mare was returned to the clinic for a check-up. The uterus was found to be almost normal in size and showed but slight exudate.

New Diplomas

New standardized diplomas designed by the parent association have been adopted by the Iowa State chapter of the Jr. A. V. M. A. Many of the veterinary schools throughout the country have already adopted the diploma and the rest plan to do the same.