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RETAINED PLACENTA AND METRITIS TREATMENT PROTOCOLS

Retained placenta and metritis are technically 2 different disorders but because both involve the uterus, retained placenta leads to metritis, and both share some treatment protocols, both conditions will be handled together.

Retained placenta is defined as not having cleaned within 24 hours after calving. Causes include twinning, calving difficulty, milk fever, abortion, induction of labor with dexamethasone, and nutritional deficiencies like low selenium in the ration. In the past, it was common practice to clean cows but that is no longer recommended because of possible damage to the uterus. Local treatment with povidone or urea boluses (3 every other day while the cervix is open) may be helpful. Antibiotic boluses or infusions were used extensively in the past but concern about milk and meat residues has led to these falling into disfavor. Good hygiene is a necessity anytime a treatment into the uterus is administered. Giving 2cc of oxytocin intramuscularly or intravenously shortly before milking for the first 2 days fresh may help.

Metritis is defined as an inflammation and infection of the uterus 3 or more days after freshening. There is a vaginal discharge that often has a foul odor and contains some blood and pus. The above-mentioned causes can be contributors as well as contamination during calving. The cow lays down, the waterbag comes out, the cow gets up, and the waterbag pulls back in, carrying manure and bedding with it.

A standard dose of a prostaglandin (Lutalyse, Estrumate, etc.), 10 days after freshening is thought by many to be helpful. A repeat dose 10 days after the first dose may be needed.

Again, antibiotic infusions (of many types and still widely used) are considered by many industry experts to be of questionable value and possibly detrimental to conception. Milk and slaughter withholding times are not well established for infusions and must be considered.

Most current treatment recommendations revolve around keeping the cow eating well and feeling good. This is accomplished in part by controlling infection with systemic antibiotics if the cow is running a fever. A common first choice would Naxcel, Excenel, Certiflex, or Excede because there is no milk withholding. Dosage is based on body weight. Other choices would be Polyflex or LA200, again with the dosage based on weight. **(WITHHOLDING)**.

If the cow is depressed and fever continues to be a problem, anti-inflammatory drugs are needed. Cow aspirin, 2 to 3 boluses orally 2 to 3 times daily, are helpful. Banamine (flunixin) **(WITHHOLDING)** at a dose of 1 to 2 cc per 100# intravenously once or twice daily can be used instead of aspirin. Aspirin and Banamine should not be used simultaneously.

These cows are very much at risk for ketosis, DAs, etc., so constant monitoring and, often, preventative treatment with propylene glycol and niacin are important.