

Intestinal intussusceptions in cattle: a retrospective study (22 cases)

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The objective of this study is to determine the prevalence and the prognosis after surgical treatment of intestinal intussusceptions (I.I.) in cattle.

This study included 22 Belgian blue cattle, 11 calves (C) and 11 adults (A) referred to the clinic for ruminants of the University of Liege on 14 months. A clinical exam, a biochemistry profile, a haematology profile and a trans-abdominal ultrasonography were performed. A celiotomy on dorsal recumbency on the midline under intravenous general anaesthesia for the calves and a right flank celiotomy on standing animal for the adults were performed. When manual reduction was inefficient, an enterectomy was performed. Fluidotherapy, Penicillin (IM, SID for 10 days), gentamicine (IV, SID for 5 to 10 days), flunixin (IV, SID for 4 days) were administered post-operatively.

In all cases, they were referred for decreased in appetite and scant fecal material. In all cases, abdominal distension was observed. In 10 cases (3 C/7 A), signs of abdominal pain were observed. Fecal material was scant in 4 cattle (1 C/3 A), absent in 13 (7 C/6 A) and contained blood in 5 (3 C/2 A). Biochemistry and haematology revealed a hypochloremic metabolic alkalosis in 16 (5 C/11 A) cases and acidosis in 5 calves. In 6 cases, ultrasonography allowed diagnosis. There were 13 jejunojejunal (4 C/9 A), 4 ileocecal (3 C/1 A), 4 ileoileal (4 C/0 A) and 1 colocolic (0 C/1 A) intussusceptions. Sixteen (7 C/9 A) cattle were treated by enterectomy, 3 (1 C/2 A) by manual reduction, 2 were euthanatized during the celiotomy (2 C/0 A) and one died before the surgery (1 C/0 A). Five calves died during the hospitalisation and 3 were euthanatized. Ten adults recovered well and were discharged 4 to 8 days after surgery. One adult was euthanatized. All necropsies revealed fibrinous peritonitis and complete intestinal ileus.

Unlike other studies, our study showed that I.I. represented 20 % of the surgical intestinal obstructions during this period. The season had no impact in our study. Clinicopathological findings were not specific. Ultrasonography may be a useful diagnostic tool. No aetiology could be determined from this study. Similar to other studies, I.I. occurred most commonly (60%) in the jejunal portion. The overall success rate after surgery was 50 %. This study also revealed that I.I. has a better prognosis for adults (91 % success rate) than calves (9 % success rate).

Key words: cattle, intestinal obstruction, intussusception, enterectomy