

Producer Newsletter – Prolapses

Cattle can get three different types of prolapses – this newsletter will help you determine which one you have!

1.) Uterine prolapse

THIS IS AN EMERGENCY. Please call us as soon as possible if your cow has a uterine prolapse – yes, even if it is 2 am! In this one case, we do not want you to bring her in to the clinic – we will come to you! Cows with uterine prolapses are at risk of death because there are major blood vessels running into the uterus and with it prolapsed, these vessels are prone to rupturing, which will cause your cow to bleed out.

To identify a uterine prolapse, look for cotyledons, or “buttons” – see the attached picture. Uterine prolapses usually occur within 24 hours of calving.

After you have called us, please get the cow into a secure location such as a chute or squeeze. Make sure you move her calmly and quietly; the more movement, the more likely vessels are to rupture!

Once we arrive, we will begin with an epidural to prevent additional straining. We will clean the uterus and assess the uterus to look for any tears. Then, we will gently replace the uterus into the cow and place a suture in the vulva to keep the uterus in place.

This is not a genetic issue, and the majority of cattle will return to normal fertility, so you can keep this cow in your herd if desired.

2.) Vaginal prolapse

Vaginal prolapses can occur for multiple reasons such as over-conditioning, pelvic injury, estrogen influence, or excessive straining. Vaginal prolapses can occur either before or after calving.

This is not an emergency – please do not call us in the middle of the night for this 😊 That being said, timely intervention can prevent damage to the vaginal tissue and make it easier to replace, so please call us once the clinic is open again.

Treatment for a vaginal prolapse is very similar to that for a uterine prolapse – epidural, clean, replace, and suture!

Vaginal prolapses are likely to recur and are genetic, so these animals should not be rebreed and daughters should not be kept in your herd.

3.) Rectal prolapse

Rectal prolapses can occur for a variety of reasons, including over-conditioning, gastro-intestinal diseases causing diarrhea, excessive coughing from respiratory disease, being “ridden” by pen-mates, estrogen influences etc.

Similar to vaginal prolapses, these cases are not emergencies, but timely intervention is important.

By now I’m sure you can guess our treatment plan - epidural, clean, replace, and suture!

There is no clear genetic link for rectal prolapses, so you can keep these girls if desired.

All of these types of prolapses require veterinary care, so please call us and we will be happy to help!

Your team at the Edson Veterinary Clinic.

