

Vet's Corner : Is too much treatment causing DA's???

Dr. Sheila McGuirk, U of Wisconsin, School of Vet Med asks if there is an association between the negative effect that too high blood glucose (hyperglycemia) has on abomasal motility and the occurrence of displaced abomasum. Ketosis is often treated before the occurrence of DA's, so she is asking if too much Dextrose treatment can be causing the DA's.

In the cow fresh less than 4 days, blood glucose stays at a normal level because milk production has not kicked in to create negative energy balance, yet.. If you don't agree, just ask your herd health vet to run a few cow side blood glucose tests on some fresh cows to prove it. This is the same simple blood drop test that diabetes patients use and it can be used on your cows, too.

These practices create excess blood glucose in cows which can lead to DA's:

- Routine use of IV Calcium-Dextrose combos given within 48 hours of calving.
- Steroid (Dexamethasone or Predef) use at the same time a 500 ml bottle of 50% Dextrose is given.
- IV Dextrose for unexplained signs or fresh cow problems other than ketosis.
- Multiple bottles of 50% Dextrose over a few days.
- Using 50% Dextrose as a transport vehicle for antibiotics, vitamins or other treatments.
- Repeated use of glucocorticoids several days in a row – Predef or Dexamethasone

These practices help avoid creating hyperglycemia and subsequent DA's:

- Reserve IV 50% Dextrose for cows with very high urine Ketone stick or use BHBA strips on a cowside blood tester to find severe cases.
- Only use Predef or Dexamethasone on uncomplicated ketosis cases. These cows are usually 20-50 Days in Milk and don't have feed intakes that support high milk production. The steroid holds up milk production in these fresh cows and allows for energy level to catch up.
- Ketosis that occurs in the first 14 DIM tends to be complicated and associated with fatty liver syndrome. There is a high level of endogenous steroids in these cows and additional steroid injections only add to the problem.
- Only use Predef or Dexamethasone once and do not administer 50% Dextrose at the same time
- Use a glucose precursor like 8 oz of propylene glycol or fresh cow drench at the time the steroid is given.

These ketosis treatments reduce the risk of hyperglycemia and DA:

- 8 oz Propylene glycol syrup
- One oral ketosis treatment tube
- Fresh Cow Drench with 1.5 lb calcium propionate
- 2 one liter bottles of Electrolytes with reduced concentration of glucose

Only one of these treatments should be used at a time for cows that test small or moderate on urine strips or BHBA blood test. Repeat treatment for up to two or three days and call the Vet if there is no improvement. To stimulate rumen motility add Yeast and Direct Fed Microbials to help ward off DA's.

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