



URACHAL INFECTION IN A CALF- A CASE REPORT

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Urachus is a cord like structure present in the umbilical cord along with two umbilical arteries and one umbilical vein. It drains excretory materials from the fetal urinary bladder to the allantois. Following birth, the umbilical arteries retract as far as to the bladder while umbilical vein and urachus are obliterated and remain connected to the umbilicus as remnants. Frequently umbilical structures get infected and resulting in reduced growth rate of the affected calf and economic loss to the farmer. Though there is an abundance of literature on omphalitis and omphalophlebitis, urachal abscess in neonates has rarely been described. The present paper reports a case of urachal abscess in a crossbred calf and its medical management.

A female crossbred calf aged one month exhibiting discharge with whitish flakes from vulva was presented to the University Veterinary Hospital, Kokkalai. Though the animal was found to be active and alert, on examination, a hard cord like structure that extended caudo-dorsally from the umbilicus towards the urinary bladder could be palpated. Palpation of the structure resulted in discharge from the vulva.

Haematological values were normal except for a mild leucocytosis, neutrophilia and elevated ESR (WBC-12, 200 mill/mm³, DC- N 68%, L 30%, E 2%, ESR 45mm/hour, Hb-13g%, Platelets-3,05,000/mm³, RBC-7.2 mill/mm³, PCV 40%).

The case was diagnosed as urachal abscess and treated for three days with Ceftriaxone Tazobactam combination intravenously. Although the flaky discharge ceased, there was no reduction in the hardness of the mass caudal to umbilicus, when the animal was presented for review after three weeks. The animal was treated with Amoxicillin Clavulanic acid combination intravenously for five days.

When animal was presented after one month, the animal was found to be unthrifty and palpation revealed the persistence of hard mass caudal to the umbilicus. Surgical removal of the urachal remnants was suggested as treatment.

In the present case, the clinical signs observed were discharge of pus from vulva and the presence of hard mass caudal to umbilicus dorsally towards the urinary bladder. Bouckaert and DeMoor (1965) also reported pyuria in calves affected with urachal abscess, as the urachus has a connection to the urinary bladder. They also palpated a thick cord caudodorsal to umbilicus. Prasanna (2003) described a calf with flakes of pus in urine and confirmed the case as urachal abscess by radiography and surgically removed the urachal remnants. As primary urinary tract infection was uncommon in the prepubertal bovine, it was essential to consider urachal abscess as a cause of pyuria in calves (Diefenderfer and Brightling 1983).

Haematological changes observed in the present study were mild leucocytosis with neutrophilia and increased ESR. Trent and Smith (1984) reported normal RBC count, leucocytosis and neutrophilia with shift to left in calves affected with urachal abscess.

In the present case, medical management was opted for urachal abscessation. Though broad spectrum antibiotics could stop pyuria, growth rate of the animal was less and it had developed slight edema in the inguinal region. So surgical removal of the urachal remnants was suggested as the treatment regime for urachal abscess. Surgical intervention was also suggested by Diefenderfer and Brightling (1983), Bouckaert and DeMoor (1965) and Prasanna (2003) for treating similar cases.

Summary

A case of urachal abscess in a female calf and its medical management is reported.

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**Deepa Chirayath¹, Sincy Zachariah²
and K. Rajankutty³**

Department of Clinical Veterinary Medicine,
College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences,
Mannuthy, Thrissur



¹ Assistant Professor

² Subject matter expert, Allianz Pet Insurance, Thiruvananthapuram

³ Professor & Head (Retd), Dept of Surgery and Radiology, CVAS, Mannuthy