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## Common reproductive problem experienced by bulls

### Penile fracture/ broken penis (Rupture of the corpus cavernosum)

Rupture/ fracture usually occurs as a result of sudden shearing forces being applied during mating (fully extended penis, thrust without complete intromission or the cow collapses or moves suddenly at the point of ejaculation). This results in a tear 2-7cm in the penile tissue and a large blood clot (haematoma).

Conservative treatment includes antibiotics, 60 days sexual rest, daily hydrotherapy and massage to reduce adhesions (10-50% may recover). Surgical correction is often required with approximately 70% regaining function but will require a long rest period. However, a vast majority of affected bulls are culled.

### Rainbow deviations

Occurs due to developmental defects of the structures of the penis or as a result of trauma.

Affected bulls initially mount however are unable to gain intromission and/ or results in trauma to the glans of the penis. Majority of affected bulls are culled.

### Persistent frenulum of the penis

This is a congenital band of tissue extending from the median raphe of the prepuce to the underside of the penis near the gland. The condition is thought to be heritable as an autosomal recessive trait. Treatment of bulls used for commercial use only can be treated by clamping and severing the attachment during extrusion using an electro-ejaculator. It is not recommended not to keep progeny from these bulls.

### 'Corkscrew' (Premature spiral deviation) of the penis

Spiraling of the tip of the penis is a normal part of the ejaculation process, occurring after intromission during the ejaculation thrust. However, premature spiraling can occur once the penis touches the perineum and therefore intromission does not occur. Occasionally it occurs in the prepuce. It is a progressive condition – initially 25% of services but will become 100%. These bulls should be culled.

### Trauma to the prepuce

Bulls with a pendulous prepuce (particularly *b. indicus*) are at greater risk of trauma to the prepuce. Everted preputial mucosa is prone to trauma, desiccation in hot and dry conditions. Some bulls develop severe swelling of the prepuce as a result of trauma. Some bulls are managed with sexual rest, supportive treatments, +/- penile slings and sexual rest. However, majority of affected bulls are culled.



### Infectious Balanoposthitis (IBP) / Bovine Herpes Virus (BoHV) infections

Bovine herpes virus (BoHV) in bulls causes severe, ulcerative infections localized to the genital tract. Initially the preputial mucosa and penis are covered with small raised nodules, vesicles and necrotic foci that may coalesce to produce large affected areas (rash type lesion on the penis and prepuce). Transmission to susceptible cows can result in endometritis, shortened oestrus periods and reduce conception rates. Once a bull is infected, they are infected for life and can commence shedding the virus in periods of stress. Treatment is symptomatic and sexual rest.



### Warts (Bovine papilloma virus)

Warts can occur over the body in various locations including the penis. In cattle warts are caused by bovine papilloma virus. The virus gain entry to the skin via a wound. Generally the warts will regress over time. However, in bulls that are intended for breeding that have penile warts, they can become traumatized and bleed during mating. This can reduce the likelihood of the cow conceiving and may increase the risk of adhesions developing on the penis. As most cases will resolve over time, treatment is often not carried out. In some cases surgical intervention maybe required.



### Single testicle/ congenital cryptorchidism

This condition is rare and results in the failure of normal testicular descent into the scrotum. It is possibly a heritable condition. May be in the inguinal area or with the abdomen. These bulls should be culled.

### Infection of the epididymis (epididymitis)

Usually associated with a bacterial infection caused by *Histophilus somni*. However it can be caused by *Mycoplasma bovis* infection and it can be an immune mediated condition. It is an uncommon condition of bulls. Affected bulls have a swelling in the epididymis of the testicle. Medical treatment can be initially trialed, however some bulls require castration of the affected testicle as a salvage procedure. Most bulls are culled.

### Infection of the sex glands (Seminal vesiculitis)

Bulls have several accessory sex glands - seminal vesicles, ampullae, prostate and bulbo-urethral gland. Infection is usually associated with bacteria and commonly *Histophilus somni* is isolated on culture. It is thought that the condition is probably as a result of an ascending infection from urinary infections or viral infections that initiate the damage first and then bacterial infections develop. Often affected bulls show no overt clinical signs. The condition is only detected during the VBBSE- affected glands per rectum may feel enlarged and be painful to touch and pus material may be seen on microscopic examination. Conservative medical treatment can be commenced (antibiotic (Tulathromycin) and anti-inflammatories). However, chronic infections are unlikely to respond and most bulls are culled.