

Uterine Prolapse

This condition occurs when the uterine horns pass through the cervix, vagina and vulva to the outside the body.

Sometimes other abdominal organs are contained within the prolapsed uterus e.g. bladder, intestines.

Most commonly occurs within 12 hours of calving.

Uterine prolapse may occur as a result of:

- Lack of uterine tone (usually due to hypocalcaemia (milk fever))
- Continued straining post-calving, particularly heifers
- Prolonged labour
- Slack broad ligaments (older cows)



Treatment

- This is an emergency and veterinary attention is required.
- If the cow is standing, slowly move the cow to the crush (moving the cow can cause the cow to further prolapse the uterus or damage the uterus or even rupture a uterine vein).
- Commonly occurs in cows that have milk fever, particularly those cows that are down, therefore it is good practice to treat the cow with calcium.
- If the cow is lying flat out, sit her up (you can prop the cow with the wheel of a motorbike, ATV or hay bale).
- If the cow is down, place a halter on the cow and tie her to a post or ATV.
- Keep the uterus clean.
- Have a bucket of warm water ready.

Once the veterinarian has arrived. The veterinarian will likely do the following:

- Treat the cow with calcium (in not already done).
- Give the cow and epidural.
- If the cow is sitting, she will be placed in frog-leg position.
- If the placenta is still present on the uterus, it will be carefully removed.

- Uterus is then cleaned and assessed for tears and if other abdominal organs are in it.
- Hypertonic saline may be used reduce the size of the uterus.
- Plenty of lubricant used to manipulate the uterus back into the cow.

Once the uterus has been placed back into the cow the veterinarian will likely do the following:

- Use a wine bottle to help completely invert the uterine horns in the body.
- Treat the cow with oxytocin (this hormone helps with uterine tone and contraction).
- Treat the cow with an anti-inflammatory.
- Antibiotics are often not required but on occasions the cow may require a course.