Management of a cervical prolapse in a pregnant 1-year old Katahdin ewe
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A 1-year old 55 kg pregnant Katahdin ewe with a body condition score of 5/9, expected to lamb at any time was diagnosed by the ambulatory services with a grade 3 vaginal prolapse. Treatment included a sacro coccygeal epidural with 2% lidocaine followed by manual reduction of the prolapsed tissue. The cervix was determined to be 1-2 finger dilated. A Buhner suture was placed with umbilical tape to prevent recurrence of the prolapse. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatory were given and owner educated regarding the importance of prompt removal of the suture upon onset of labor.

Four days after initial examination she was presented to the teaching hospital in labor with recurrent grade 3 vaginal prolapse inducing a dystocia. Elective cesarian section was performed. Two large ram lambs (one alive and one dead) were delivered. Postoperative anti-inflammatory, antibiotics and prostaglandin F2α were given to the ewe.

The ewe and lamb were discharged from the hospital and was owner instructed to monitor for further signs of illness. Vaginal prolapse in sheep most often occurs in late gestation. A Buhner suture is a routine treatment for vaginal prolapse and works by replicating the vestibular constrictor muscles. It is essential for the ewe to be closely monitored as impending parturition ensues, as a catastrophic outcome can occur for both the ewe and lambs if the suture is not untied prior to delivery resulting in trauma and/or death to animals. The most common etiologies include, short tail docking, large fetuses and overconditioning of the dam, as well as, genetic predisposition. This case warranted extensive client education due to known high genetic merit associated with the flock. Kathadin sheep are typically not tail docked, therefore further sire or genetic traits must be studied. Upon full recovery of this patient, culling was recommended to avoid potential genetic spread of this condition.

**Keywords:** Ovine, prolapse, dystocia, cesarian, genetics

**References**