

Mummified fetus and a pup with eviscerated intestines in a normal litter at term in a Labrador bitch : a case report

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ABSTRACT

A rare case of canine mummified fetus and a pup with eviscerated intestine in a normal litter at term is reported in this communication.

Key words : Canine mummification, eviscerated intestine

Fetal mummification is very common in animals with large litter like swine and feline and less common in sheep, cattle and mare, but rare in canine (Arthur *et al.*, 1989). The present communication reports a case of mummified fetus and pup with evisceration of intestines delivered along with the normal litter at term in a bitch.

A Labrador bitch, aged 2 years at full term of its first whelping was presented to the PAU Veterinary Clinics for the treatment of dystocia. History revealed that one dead pup was delivered previous day without any further progress of fetal deliveries. On per vaginum examination, fetal head was palpable in front of cervix. The uterine contractions were absent. Condition was therefore diagnosed as maternal dystocia due to secondary uterine inertia. Inj. Calcium Sandoz 5 ml I.M. and Injection Oxytocin (10 I.U.) slow IV in NSS over a period of half an hour was administered to initiate uterine contraction. Following this, two male and one female live pups and a mummified pup with twisted umbilical cord (Fig. 1) were delivered unassisted along with fetal membranes. Later two more live female pups were delivered with last pup having eviscerated intestine. One or more fetuses could be mummified in large litter of canines at the time of delivery (Prabhakar *et al.*, 1993). In the present case only a single mummified fetus with well formed bones was delivered indicating its age being at least 40 days. Canine herpes virus infection in early pregnancy of bitches has been shown to result in fetal death and subsequent mummification, whereas an infection in mid pregnancy results in abortion and in late pregnancy in stillbirth (Hashimoto *et al.*, 1979). In the present case twisting of umbilical cord



Fig.1. Mummified pup with twisted umbilical cord

appears to be the cause of fetal death and subsequent mummification as single pup was mummified in the present case. The other pup having eviscerated intestine was treated by reposing the eviscerated part and applying interrupted horizontal mattress sutures with nylon (no.1/0) on skin. Congenital abnormality of evisceration of intestines may be due to incomplete fusion of midline of abdomen.

Thus, a rare case with two abnormalities during gestation i.e. mummification and evisceration of fetal intestines in a bitch is put on record.

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