

FOREIGN BODY TRAUMATIC HEPATITIS IN A LAMB

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A wide range of foreign bodies were reported to occur in the gastrointestinal tract of large and small ruminants (Remi-Adewunmi *et al.*, 2004) which may result in indigestion, development of toxæmic condition and ultimately death. A case of mortality due to traumatic hepatitis associated with severe pneumonia in a lamb caused by accidental ingestion of a neem twig is presented.

CASE HISTORY AND OBSERVATIONS

A Kilakarsal ram lamb of three months and sixteen days of age of Kilakarsal sheep section of Instructional Livestock Farm Complex, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Tirunelveli, was presented with a history of anorexia, not grazing, dull, standing in isolation with head pressed downwards. On clinical examination, mucopurulent nasal discharge, regurgitation, respiratory distress, swelling of head and slight oedema of forelimbs and thoracic region were noticed. The animal was reluctant to move, evinced pain and distress when forced to move or lie down.

TREATMENT AND DISCUSSION

The lamb was treated symptomatically with antispasmodic, antibiotics and appetite stimulants for four days, but could not improved. The animal died on the seventh day of ailment. On post mortem examination, a neem twig of length 11 cm and circumference of 0.3 cm was found in situ piercing through the rumen wall. The sharp end of the neem twig had pierced from the ventral sac of rumen, reaching the visceral surface of the liver, and exiting through the parietal surface 3 cm above the umbilical fissure (Fig.1 and 2). Purulent inflammation was noticed around the exit wound in liver. The fistulous tract created by the foreign object had further damaged the diaphragm and the right lobe of the lung, causing severe pneumonia. The affected lung was observed to be haemorrhagic - brick red in colour with multiple abscesses of size ranging from 0.5 to 2 cm in diameter. The trachea and bronchi were filled with mucopurulent discharge. Hypertrophy of heart, fibrinous pericarditis and haemorrhagic inflammation of mucous membrane of small intestine were the other important post mortem findings. It was concluded that accidental ingestion of neem twig has caused death in the lamb due to traumatic hepatitis associated with severe pneumonia.



Fig.1. Neem twig piercing the liver

Tender neem leaves are commonly fed to pre weaned lambs under stall fed conditions. The neem leaves are also used as important supplementary fodder to grazing lambs. In this case, the lamb upon return from grazing had consumed neem leaves offered in the shed. The neem twig might have been accidentally swallowed along with the leaves. The twig lost its outer coat upon ruminal digestion and as one end became sharpened, might have pierced the ventral sac of rumen. It might have traversed further to the liver, lung surface due to the ruminal contractions leaving a trail of purulent inflammation along the fistulous tract. It is generally accepted that sheep are selective feeders and ingestion of foreign bodies is significant. The incidence of foreign body ingestion was only 2% (Halitat *et al.* (1997) recorded the prevalence of a and reticulum of sheep presented to veterinary clinic of neem twig as a foreign body is rare in nature, hence it is advised that adequate care should be taken when feeding neem leaves to lambs.

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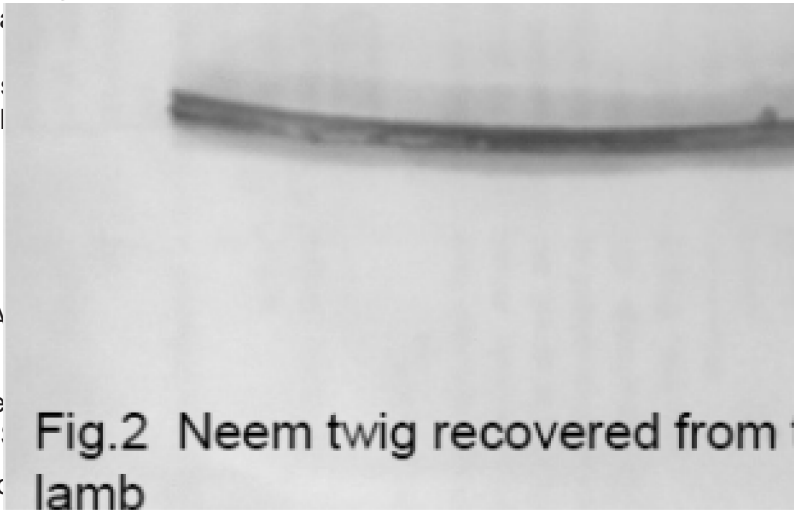


Fig.2 Neem twig recovered from lamb

