



## HALE VETERINARY GROUP

### FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER MAY 2010



#### **ABOMASAL DISPLACEMENT EXPLAINED**

We have recently seen a high incidence of abomasal displacement in our dairy herds, so thought it would be a useful topic to cover in this month's newsletter.

Abomasal displacement is generally seen in dairy cows in the first 6 weeks after calving and the classic clinical signs are reduced milk yield and reduced intake of concentrates, although the cow continues to eat forage.

It results from failure of abomasal function with subsequent build up of gas inside the abomasum so that it "floats" out of its normal position to a displaced position on the left or right side of the cow under the ribs. Left displacement occurs more commonly than right displacement.

Failure of abomasal function can result from various causes, including: rumenal acidosis, toxæmia (eg. due to mastitis/metritis), metabolic disease (eg. milk fever/ketosis/fatty liver disease) and abomasal ulceration.

Uterine involution and reduced dry matter intake post calving predispose to abomasal displacement as there is increased abdominal space for displacement due to reduced uterine and rumen size.

Treatment of abomasal displacement involves treating any underlying cause and then performing surgery to replace the abomasum to its natural position. In general, treatment of left displacement is more successful than treatment of right displacement.

As with most things, prevention is better than cure when it comes to abomasal displacement. Prevention involves: detecting and treating underlying causes as soon as possible before abomasal displacement can occur, feeding cows a balanced diet with an adequate amount of fibre in it (a diet should be at least 50:50, ideally 60:40, forage:concentrate ratio) and optimising

dry matter intake post calving. Speak to one of our farm animal vets if you would like more information on how to prevent abomasal displacement in your herd.

#### **FLY CONTROL**

Unfortunately, with all the lovely weather we have had recently, there has been an increase in the number of flies around. As well as causing direct annoyance, flies also transmit a variety of diseases (eg. Bluetongue and New Forest Eye) and can severely compromise animal welfare (eg. Fly Strike). For these reasons it is important that you use a method of fly control on your animals. We stock a variety of products to control flies – speak to one of our farm animal vets if you would like more information.

#### **SMALL HOLDER MEETINGS**

Jenny Grewal, one of our new farm animal vets, is keen to run a series of meetings for our small holder clients on a variety of subjects. The first meeting is on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, and will cover the use of wormers in sheep and goats. If you are interested in attending the meeting please contact her at the practice on 01249 653561.

#### **HVG HEALTH WATCH**

Abomasal displacement has continued to be a problem in May. Mineral deficiencies have been seen in some suckler herds after the cows have been turned out to pasture. We have also seen a severe case of rumenal acidosis due to barley poisoning after a group of suckler cows broke into a barley store.

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