

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
Cornell Sheep Farm

SUSPECTED ABOMASAL HEMORRHAGE SYNDROME

Signs

Lambs in good body condition between 1 and 3 weeks of age are occasionally found lethargic and weak, with a distended abdomen and poor suckle reflex. The cause of this syndrome is unknown but at necropsy many of these lambs have a large milk clot admixed with blood in the abomasum and hemorrhages in the wall of the abomasum. A clostridial toxemia is one possible etiology under consideration, but bacteriology and histology at necropsy has been inconclusive.

Treatment

The lamb will be given 1 cc of procaine penicillin G orally in case there is clostridial overgrowth in the gastrointestinal tract. An additional 1 cc of penicillin will be given SC. The lamb will further be given 1/2 teaspoon of sodium bicarbonate, mixed in cold water and given orally, in case the weakness is a metabolic acidosis. Milk or milk replacer will be withheld for 12 hours, but electrolytes may be given orally if the lamb appears to be dehydrated. The penicillin and bicarb will be repeated the next day if the lamb has not recovered by that time, or the lamb will be euthanized.

Prevention

Ewes will receive *Clostridium perfringens* C&D toxoid boosters at least 1 week before lambing is due to begin. Field trials are underway to evaluate the benefit of additional vaccination protocols.