

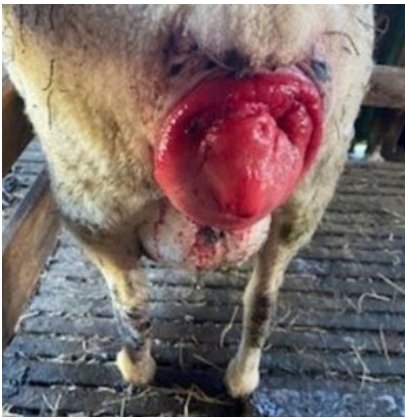
Overview

Often referred to as “bearings,” prolapses occur in sheep, cattle and pigs at different times and for different reasons.

Ewes

Seen prior to lambing in older, fatter ewes carrying multiple lambs, a vaginal prolapse is most common.

During late pregnancy, hormones are released to soften the reproductive tract. At the same time, abdominal pressure can increase due to a full rumen, growing foetuses and internal body fat. These factors combine to allow the vagina and cervix to be pushed externally. In doing so, the vagina can kink the opening to the bladder, which continues to fill but cannot empty.



Ewe prolapse

Cows

Unlike ewes, cows tend to prolapse after giving birth, and it is usually a complete prolapse of the uterus, not just the vagina and cervix.



LIFESTYLE ANIMALS: A GUIDE TO Prolapses

These cows are almost always low in calcium too, so will require treatment for **milk fever*** as well as the prolapse.

Management/ Prevention/ Treatment

Ewes

Use of a vaginal retention device, such as a bearing retainer or prolapse harness may be beneficial in these certain circumstances.

As a preventative measure, avoid ewes being overfat prior to lambing to minimize the pressure in the abdomen.

Cows

Cows require immediate veterinary treatment to replace the prolapse.

In both species, it is important to replace the prolapse as soon as possible to avoid a ruptured bladder and damage to the soft vaginal or uterine lining.

When to call us

While some ewe prolapses will reduce easily, cow prolapses are difficult to replace properly and require veterinary intervention immediately.

If in doubt, call the vet as soon as you notice anything unusual around your animal’s back end, as it is important to treat these conditions as soon as possible.

**See our Metabolic Disease handout for further info*

**Updated Nov 25*