

Advanced Equine Reproduction Course

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Question: Does anyone have experience in inducing abortions after endometrial cup formation?

Induction of abortion from days 34-120.¹⁵

1. Multiple doses of PGF₂ α or PGF₂ α analog have been shown to effectively terminate pregnancy in several studies.^{3,6,7} Mares injected once or twice daily aborted after three to five days of treatment.
2. Intrauterine infusion or lavage can also be employed to induce abortion, but is more successful prior to chorioallantoic attachment to the endometrium (~80 days of gestation).^{1,4}
3. After attachment, manual invasion of the cervix, rupture of the chorioallantios, and manual extraction of the fetus and membranes are more expeditious.⁴ This procedure should be followed by a sterile saline lavage to remove any remnants of fetal membranes, blood clots, or fibrin tags.
4. Transvaginal ultrasonographically guided allantoicentesis and aspiration of allantoic fluid followed by injection of potassium penicillin is another technique for pregnancy reduction.^{8,9}

The owner should be informed that the mare is unlikely to return to estrous until after the endometrial cups regress, days 100-120.

Induction of abortion after 4 months gestation.¹⁵

1. Conflicting reports exist on induction of abortion during mid gestation with PGF₂ α . One study reported that PGF₂ α will not successfully induce abortion during midgestation.¹ However, other studies describe clinical trials in which multiple injections resulted in abortion in mares between 100 and 245 days of gestation.^{3,10} Intramuscular injections of 10 mg of PGF₂ α were administered at 12 hour intervals until abortion occurred. This technique was successful in 2 mares at 158 and 173 days of gestation. Abortion occurred 37 hours after treatment in one mare (4 injections) and 61 (6 injections) hours after treatment in the other.¹⁰
2. Manual disruption of fetal membranes and removal of the fetus is reported as being a reliable technique for termination of late pregnancies. For easy removal of the fetus, it is suggested that cervical dilation be enhanced by treatment with 6-10 mg of estradiol given intramuscularly 24 hours before induction of abortion.⁴ Another method of termination of late term pregnancy includes 2 intramuscular injections of 5mg of estradiol benzoate at 12 hour intervals. The estradiol treatments are followed by 4 intravenous injections of 50 IU oxytocin given at 3 hour intervals. Three hours after the last oxytocin injection, the 5 mg of estradiol benzoate injection should be repeated. Four to 5 injections of oxytocin were reported to be successful. Expulsion of the fetus should occur within 36 hours.¹⁰ Infusions of large volumes of saline have been recommended by many authors to aid myometrial contractions and expulsion of fetal membranes.¹⁻⁴
3. Trans-abdominal, ultrasonographically guided fetal cardiac puncture and injection of 1 ml of potassium chloride (2 mEq/ml), a method of reducing twin pregnancies, could be adapted for single pregnancy termination. This procedure should be followed by administration of

Banamine® on the day of the procedure for a total of four days. The mare may need to be started on progesterone at the discretion of the attending veterinarian. This procedure seems more successful between days 115 and 130.¹²

4. Finally, intra-allantoic injection of 15 mls of an aqueous solution containing 30 mg of dexamethasone in which 500,000 IU of crystalline potassium penicillin had been dissolved (administered trans-cervically) induced abortion within 3 days in treated mares.¹³ This method is suspected to cause septicemia in the fetus as the aborted tissues were autolyzed.¹

The owner should realize that induced abortion beyond the first trimester may be complicated by dystocia, retained placenta, and trauma to the genital tract.

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