Fat Cow Syndrome

Also Called: fatty liver; pregnancy toxemia

Affecting: fat dairy cows following parturition or those with left displaced abomasum (LDA) for several days

Occurrence: usually the few days following parturition

Signs: anorexia; inactive rumen; almost no milk; weakness; recumbency; muscular tremors; death

Cause: prepartum over-conditioning

Diagnosis: signs; fatty liver (post mortem); ketonemia; increase in liver enzymes; increase in ketone bodies; lesions in the liver from excess fat

Remedy: intravenous glucose and electrolyte solutions; insulin; anabolic steroids; propylene glycol by drench to stimulate rumen motility; treatment for secondary conditions (e.g. mastitis or displaced abomasum)

Prevention: separate dry cows into close-up and far-off groups; feed should be palatable to ensure a healthy appetite in the transition cow; cows should be gradually changed to the lactation diet by slowing adding grain to the dry ration; provide good quality, long hay

Also Consider: LDA, right displaced abomasum (RDA), milk fever, abomasal impaction, vagus indigestion, peritonitis