Clinical findings and diagnosis of thrombosis of the caudal vena cava in cattle

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This paper describes the causes, clinical findings and diagnosis of caudal vena caval thrombosis in cattle. Occlusion of the vein is caused by a ‘white’ thrombus, and typical clinical signs include chronic weight loss, poor general condition and intermittent fever. Most affected cattle have respiratory signs; in some, pulmonary haemorrhage, ascites and sudden death occur. Haematological analyses, endoscopy of the respiratory tract and ultrasonographic examination of the pleura, liver and abdomen should be carried out in cattle suspected of having thrombosis of the caudal vena cava. The most important diagnostic finding is dilatation of the caudal vena cava seen via ultrasonography. Normally, the caudal vena cava appears triangular in cross section but in cattle with thrombosis it is oval or circular. The prognosis is poor and there is no treatment.

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