UNILATERAL ANORCHIA IN A CRYPTORCHID RAM

Marino G, Rizzo S, Sciuto M, Mignacca S, Zanghi A

Among abnormalities of the ram reproductive tract, cryptorchidism is a common defect. It can affect one or both testes. This study described a case of bilateral cryptorchidism in a 1 year old crossbreed ram in which unilateral anorchia was found at the slaughterhouse. Caudally to the left kidney, an abnormal epididymis without testis and spermatid vessels, confirmed also histologically, was recognized. The retained contralateral testis showed some vascular abnormalities and, histologically, hypoplastic seminiferous tubules and a small area characterized by tubular structures containing atypical Sertoli cells and mineralization foci. Other genital organs were normally developed. Anorchia is extremely rare in domestic animals and it is generally associated to ipsilateral absence of epididymis. The term anorchia was used in this work because there is a strong suspicious that the left testis underwent a total degeneration during fetal period, although the congenital absence of the testicular sketch could not be excluded. The presence of an abnormal epididymis, the lack of the spermatid vessels and the detection of vascular abnormalities in the contralateral testis are suggestive of a defect in the blood supply occurring in the early fetal period. The presence of tubular structures with atypical Sertoli cells, in agreement with Foster and Ladd's, may be interpreted as a preneoplastic change of the retained testes. Testicular neoplasia is associated with cryptorchidism in several species, but, this relationship is unknown in the ram in which only few testicular tumours have been reported.

REFERENCES