

Countryside Veterinary Service PC – The DA by. Dr. Videto

If we could get rid of DA's, Johne's disease, and mastitis, we would solve 90% of most dairy cow problems. But right now we can't. So the next best thing is being able to diagnose, and treat our cows correctly and in a timely fashion.

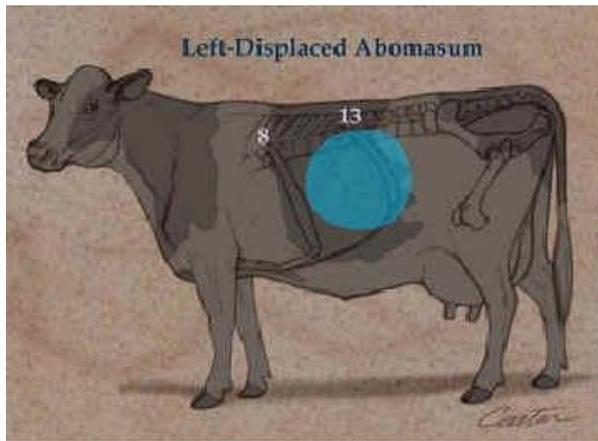
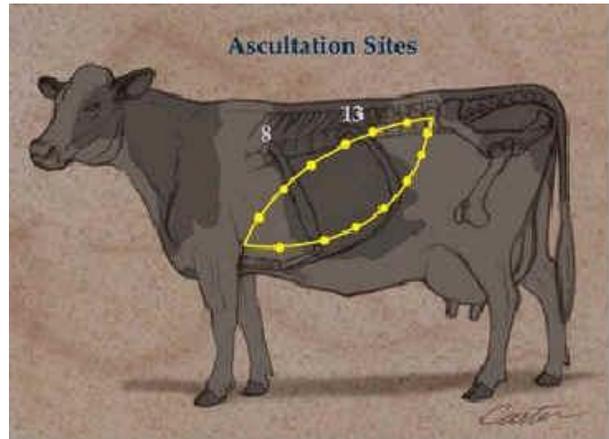
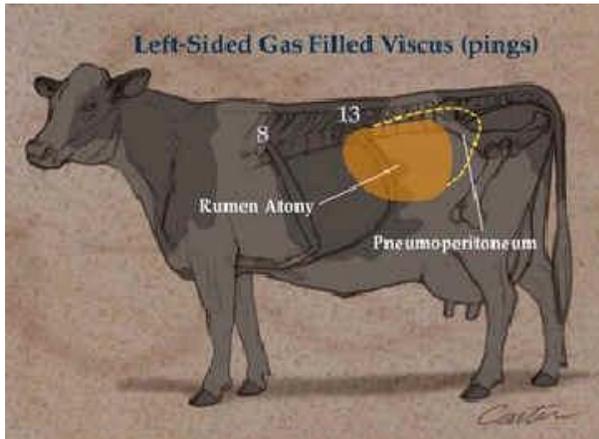
To diagnose a DA you place the stethoscope on the abdomen of the cow and "flick" the side of the cow with your finger. The density of the object directly behind the spot that you are "flicking" will determine the pitch of the sound you hear with the stethoscope. Gas will give you a high pitched "ping" and fluid, or solid, will give you a dull "thud." For example; if you have your stethoscope on the left side of the cows abdomen that has a rumen full of heavy feed and you percuss (flick and listen) her, you will hear a dull thud. If the abomasum is displaced to the left and filled with air, you will get a high pitched ping.

In school I was taught never to ping a cow and make the statement "she has a DA." This may sound silly to most but if you think about it, this advice was good. We have no way of knowing exactly what we are listening to until we cut into the cow. However, the location and pitch of the ping can help you determine what part of the gut is blown up with air.

The main purpose of this month's topic is not to teach you how to listen for a DA because many of you already know how to do that. It is to help you determine when the ping is due to something else not requiring surgery.

- **6 of the main causes of misdiagnosed DA's are:**
 1. Gas in the spiral colon (this will give you a high pitched ping on the right side of the cow but does not extend further than the last two ribs from the back. This is mistaken for a RDA/RTA occasionally. This is normal for a cow and the ping will usually be gone a few hours later as the gas moves through the gut.)
 2. Peritonitis will result in a ping high on the abdomen and sometimes on both sides of the cow. These cows will usually be fresh cows and have a bad uterus and fever.
 3. Gas in the uterus will sometimes give you a ping high on the abdomen on either side similar to the peritonitis.
 4. An abomasal impaction will sometimes result in a difficult to hear ping. These are hard to differentiate from a DA because the cows symptoms will be very similar to a LDA.
 5. Rumen bloat will sometimes give you a ping. But, unless the bloat is severe the ping will be a lower pitched ping.
 6. The cecum will sometimes blow up with air/twist and ping on the right side high and on the back part of the abdomen. Usually this can be confirmed by rectal palpation. It will feel like a loaf of bread (or balloon) just inside the pelvis. This many times does require surgery to correct.

LDA



Definitions for the diagrams:

Atony - lack of tone (bloat)

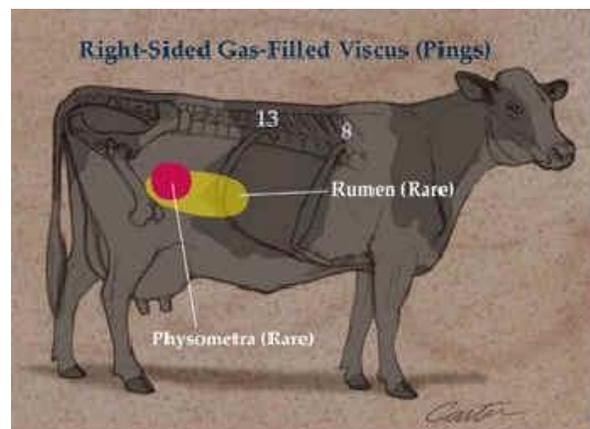
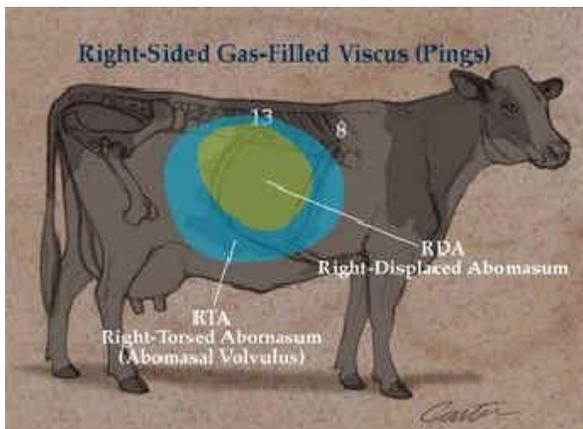
Pneumoperitoneum - air in the abdominal cavity

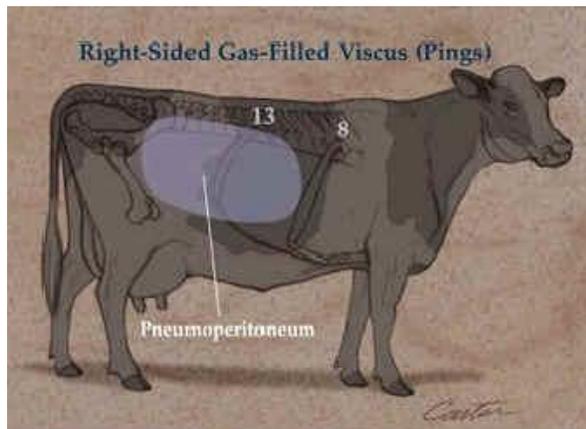
Physometra - air in the uterus

Viscus - hollow organ

DA - displaced abomasum "twisted stomach"

RDA





Definitions for the diagrams:

Atony - lack of tone (bloat)

Pneumoperitoneum - air in the abdominal cavity

Physometra - air in the uterus

Viscus - hollow organ

DA - displaced abomasum "twisted stomach"