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SOME TRIALS TO IMPROVE THE REPRODUCTIVE EFFECIENCY OF SUBESTRUS BUFFALO COWS USING PGF₂ α AT MID LUTEAL PHASE

(With 3 Tables)

By

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بعض المحاولات العلاجية لتحسين الكفاءة التناسلية لإناث الجاموس
ذات الشياح الصامت عن طريق استخدام البروستاجلاندين ف ٢ ألفا
في طور الجسم الأصفر

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أجريت هذه الدراسة على عدد ٣٣ من إناث الجاموس التي تعاني من مشكلة الشياح الصامت وعدد ١٠ من إناث الجاموس طبيعية الشياح كمجموعة ضابطة بدون علاج لمقارنة النتائج. المجموعة الأولى (١٢ حيوان) تم علاجها بوضع ١٠ مجم (PGF₂α) في المهبل في اليوم الحادي عشر من الدورة ، المجموعة الثانية (١٠ حيوانات) حقنت ١٠ مجم (PGF₂α) في شفرة المهبل على عمق ١ سم ، المجموعة الثالثة (١١ حيوان) حقنت ٢٥ مجم (PGF₂α) في العضل ، المجموعة الرابعة (١٠ حيوانات) استخدمت كمجموعة ضابطة. كل الحيوانات المعالجة التي ظهر عليها الشبق تم تلقيحها بطلوقة جاموس ذو كفاءة تناسلية عالية وكل الحيوانات التي لم يظهر عليها الشبق بعد العلاج تم تلقيحها اصطناعيا في وقت ثابت (٧٢-٩٦ ساعة) بعد الحقن. تم أخذ عينات بلازما لقياس هرمون البروجستيرون من كل المجموعات خلال طور الجسم الأصفر قبل الحقن مباشرة ، بعد الحقن بيوم وبعد يومين و خلال يوم ظهور الشبق (يوم التلقيح)، بعد ٥ ، ١٠ ، ١٥ ، ٢٠ ، ٢٥ ، ٣٠ يوم بعد التلقيح في كل المجموعات بما فيها المجموعة الضابطة. تم تحديد الحمل بالفحص عن طريق المستقيم بعد ٥٠-٦٠ يوم بعد التلقيح الطبيعي والاصطناعي . وأظهرت النتائج أن أعلى معدل لظهور الشبق كان في المجموعتين اللتين تم حقنهما في شفرة المهبل والعضل عنها في التي تم حقنها في المهبل. لم يكن هناك اختلافات معنوية بين كل المجموعات المعالجة في الزمن المستغرق من بداية الحقن حتى حدوث الشياح. كانت نسبة التبويض في المجموعات التي ظهر عليها الشبق بعد الحقن ١٠٠% وفي المجموعة الضابطة ٨٠% بينما كانت نسبته ٦٠ ، ٥٠ ، ٣٣،٣٣ % في الحيوانات التي لم يظهر عليها الشبق. بعد حقن البروستاجلاندين

في الحقن داخل المهبل ، شفرة المهبل والعضل. لم يكن هناك اختلافات في معدل الإخصاب بعد التلقيح الأول في كل المجموعات التي ظهر عليها الشبق والمجموعة الضابطة. بينما كان هناك زيادة طفيفة في معدل الإخصاب الكلى في المجموعات المعالجة عن المجموعة الضابطة. تم استنتاج أن الجرعات الصغيرة من البروستاجلاندين في الحقن داخل المهبل والشفرة يمكن استخدامه بنجاح لتحسين الخصوبة في إناث الجاموس التي تعاني من الشيع الصامت كذلك تم استنتاج أن قياس هرمون البروجستيرون في البلازما يفيد في تحديد الشيع الصامت وانعدام التبويض وكذلك تشخيص الحمل في تلك الحيوانات.

SUMMARY

Thirty three subestrus buffalo cows and 10-normal cycling females with apparent estrus symptoms were allocated to one of four treatment groups. The 1st group (n=12) received 10 mg of PGF₂ α per-vaginum. The 2nd group (n=10) injected with 10 mg of PGF₂ α at a depth of 1 cm on the labia majora. The 3rd group (n=11) treated with 25 mg of PGF₂ α injected intramuscularly. The 4th group (n=10) with apparent estrous signs received normal saline and used as control group. Plasma progesterone were estimated in all groups under investigation before treatment at (luteal phase), 1st and 2nd days following treatment and at 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, and 30th after insemination. In all treated groups, the females confirmed in heat mated with good fertile buffalo bulls. Animals failed to exhibit standing estrus were artificially inseminated twice at fixed time (72 and 96 hours after injection of PGF₂ α). Pregnancy rates were determined by palpation per-rectum between 50 and 60 days following insemination (natural or artificial). The incidence of subestrus buffalo cows exhibited standing estrus was found to be higher after intravaginal and intramuscular injection of PGF₂ α (72.73 – 80.00%) than following administration of PGF₂ α per vaginum (58.33%). The time elapsed until appearance of heat symptoms not varied among all treated subestrus females. All treated animals exhibited standing estrus and 80% of the control group were ovulated. While the ovulation rate was recorded to be 60, 50 and 33.33% of buffalo cows that not exhibited standing estrus following administration of PGF₂ α per-vaginum, intravaginal and intramuscular, respectively. The 1st service conception rate not varied among all subestrus females that exhibited standing estrus (50-62.50%) and control group (60%), while the total conception rate slightly increased in treated groups (75-87.50%), than the control one (70%). In buffalo cows that not exhibited standing estrus after treatment

with PGF₂ α, The 1st service and total conception rates were observed to be 25 and 60%, respectively per-vaginum, 50 and 50% intra-vulvar, respectively and 33.33 and 33.33% intramuscular. Low dose of intravulvar or intra-vaginal could used successfully for improvement fertility of subestrus buffaloes. In addition the plasma progesterone concentration can be used for detection of silent estrus as well as pregnancy diagnosis and anovulatory cycle in buffaloes.

Key words: Reproductive efficiency, Buffalo cow, PGF₂ α.

INTRODUCTION

Subestrus or silent heat is one of the major problems affecting the reproductive performance in buffaloes via increasing the claving interval and loss in milk production (Awasthi *et al.*, 1998). The use of prostaglandin for controlling silent heat is a fairly recent development in buffaloes (Sarvaiya *et al.*, 1995). Administration of PGF₂ α produces luteolysis and decreased blood progesterone level (Abdel-Ghaffar *et al.*, 1994); treated animals return to estrus within 3 days (Ibrahim *et al.*, 1990). The present investigation was undertaken to assess the efficacy of different doses and routes of administration of PGF₂ α for induction of estrus in subestrus buffaloes.

MATERIALS and METHODS

The present study was conducted on a farm of dairy buffaloes belonging to Horin village at El-Menofia province. Animals exhibiting post-partum or post-service anestrus were screened through repeated gynaecological examination three successive times at seven days interval. Animals, clinically free from genital infection and having a corpus luteum in one of the ovaries were selected. Subestrus animals (33) which did not shows clear external signs of estrus were injected with PGF₂ α (lutalyse, Upjohn, Kalamazo, MI, USA) on day12 of the cycle. These animals were classified randomly into 3 groups. A 4th group (n=10) constituted the normal cycling animals.

Group 1: Consisted of 12 animals were treated with 10 mg of PGF₂α each per vaginum by filling the drug in 2 AI straws, 0.5 cc capacity and depositing it in the dorsal fornex of the vagina with the help of an artificial insemination gun.

Group 2: Consisted of 10 animals were injected each with 10 mg PGF₂ α at a depth of 10cm on the labia majora through intra-valvosubmucosal route, ipsilateral to corpus luteum.

Group 3: Consisted of 11 animals were treated with 35 mg PGF₂α through intra muscular route.

Group 4 (control): This group consisted of 10 normal cycling buffaloes received normal saline and served as control.

All the treated animals were subjected to estrus detection by observation of signs of estrus twice every day. The changes in ovarian activity were monitored by rectal palpation. The estrus was confirmed by the presence of graffian follicle in the ovary and turgidity of uterine horns along with other behavioural signs of estrus.

Animals showing standing heat were bred naturally with a fertile buffalo bull in the second half of estrus. Females failing to exhibit standing estrus were artificially inseminated twice with frozen semen at 72 and 96 hrs following treatment (fixed time AI). All groups were examined per rectum between days 12 and 14 following treatment to detect the presence of corpus luteum to confirm ovulation. Pregnancy diagnosis was carried out in animals which did not return to estrus on days 50 - 60 post-breeding. Those which returned to estrus were re-inseminated. The response to treatment for induction of estrus, ovulation rate, 1st service conception and total conception rate were recorded in all groups.

Blood samples were collected by Jugular vein puncture in heparinized sterile evacuated tubes before treatment as well as on the 1st and 2nd days after treatment. In addition, blood samples were collected from all animals on the day of insemination (0 day), 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th and 30th days post insemination.

Radioimmunological estimation of plasma progesterone (El-Banna et al., 1985) were determined at the Laboratories of Endocrinology Research Unit. Belonging to Radiology Department, Nuclear Research Center. Atomic energy Authority, Enshas, Egypt.

Data obtained were statistically analysed using the statistical Analysis system SAS (1987)

RESULTS

Results presented in Table 1 indicated that, buffalo cows exhibited standing estrus was recorded to be significantly higher after

intravulvar and intramuscular injection of PGF₂ α (80.00 and 72.73%, respectively) than post-administration of PGF₂ α pervaginum (58.33 %). Moreover, the time elapsed till appearance of standing estrus did not vary significantly among different groups, of treated animals.

As shown in Table (2), the ovulation rate was reported to be 100% in buffalo cows exhibited estrus after administration of PGF₂ α with different routes and 80% for the control group. Further reduction in ovulation rate was observed in females not exhibited standing estrus after administration of PGF₂ α - with different routes (33.33 – 60.00 %). The 1st service and total conception rates were recorded to be higher in females exhibited estrus (50.00 – 62.50 % and 75.00 – 87.50% respectively), than those not exhibited estrus (20.00 – 50.00% and 33.33 – 50.00%, respectively) after administration of PGF₂ α with different routes.

Plasma progesterone concentration in subestrus buffaloes and normal cycling ones before and after treatment are presented in Table 3.

DISCUSSION

The present study revealed that 7 out of 12 buffaloes exhibited standing heat with a mean interval of 86.71 ± 5.55 hr post administration of PGF₂ α per vaginum (Table, 1). This observation was in consonance with the reports of Subramaniam *et al.*, (1991) who obtained similar results after per vaginal PGF₂α treatment in Indian buffaloes. The majority of animals exhibited estrus between 72 and 96 hours. Ten out of 12 animals revealed ovulation and corpus luteum formation. It is interesting to note that 7 of 7 animals ovulated which exhibited standing estrus while 3 out of 5 animals ovulated silently. This finding explained that most of subestrus buffaloes did not express signs of estrus, ovulate silently following on prostaglandin treatment, therefore fixed time AI is a must. As shown in Table 3 a high level of progesterone was detected during estrus phase in females that not exhibited estrus (0.68 – 0.98ng / ml) and it was (0.43 - 0.66 ng / ml) in females exhibited estrus after treatment with PGF₂α while in normal cycling control buffaloes was (0.23 – 0.63ng/ml) during estrus phase. Therefore the high level of progesterone during estrus may explain the silent ovulation of subestrus buffaloes (Gupta and Dhoble, 1990). The 1st service conception and total conception rate with natural service buffaloes was 57.14 and 85.71% respectively, while it was 20% and 40% in fixed time AI females. Our

finding are in agreement with earlier reports (Pant and Singh, 1991; Singh and Dabas, 1996 and Awasthi *et al.*, 1998).

In intravulvar group (Table, 1) was found that 8 out of 10 females exhibited standing estrus with a mean interval 81.82 ± 6.65 hours (70-90 hours) with 100% ovulation. Rectal examination confirmed ovulation in 9 out of 10 buffaloes from which one buffalo ovulated without expression of estrus signs. The time elapsed till appearance of estrus came in accordance with the observation of Singh *et al.* (1987). The 1st service conception and total conception rate in buffaloes with natural service was (62.52 and 87.50%) and with that of fixed time AI was 50% each for 1st service conception and total conception rate (Table 2) which approximates the finding of Gautam *et al.*, (1990). However Singh *et al.*, (1987) reported a higher conception rate.

In I / M group (Table 1) 8 out of 11 buffaloes exhibited estrus within 86.63 ± 4.09 hours with 100% ovulation rate, while rectal examination confirmed ovulation in 9 out of 11 animals from which one buffalo-cow ovulated silently. Most females exhibited estrus between 72 and 96 hours which is in conformity with Singh and Dabas (1996). The 1st service conception and total conception rate in females exhibited estrus was 50 and 75% and it was 33.3% each in females with fixed time AI (Table 2). A similar results obtained by Fulka *et al.* (1978).

In control group which represented the normal cycling animals 8/10 females exhibited estrus and the ovulation rate, 1st service conception, and total conception rate was 80%, 60%, and 70% respectively. A similar finding was reported by Bhela *et al.* (1996).

Non significant difference was observed between all treated groups with 10 mg PGF₂α and 35 mg PGF₂α regarding ovulation rate, 1st service conception and total conception rate. No significant difference between levels of progesterone during early pregnancy in all treated and control groups. A similar finding was recorded by (El-Belely *et al.*, 1995).

The steady increase of progesterone level during pregnancy in non returned females of all groups can be used for pregnancy diagnosis in buffaloes. These finding came in accordance with other previous reports (Sharma and Kaker, 1990, Gupta and Dhoble, 1990 and Eissa *et al.*, 1995)

In conclusion, low doses of prostaglandin F₂α given via in intravulvar or intravaginal routes could be used successfully and conveniently giving similar results as those obtained with high IM dose

of PGF₂α. In addition plasma progesterone concentration can be used for detecting silent and anovulatory estrus as well as pregnancy diagnosis in buffaloes.

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Table 1: Rate of response and time elapsed from treatment till appearance of standing estrus in different treated groups.

	Total treated females	Females exhibited standing estrus		
		n	%	Time elapsed
Group 1 (pervaginum)	12	7	58.33 ^b	86.71±5.55 ^a (72-96 hr)
Group 2 (intravulvar)	10	8	80% ^a	81.82±6.65 ^a (70-90 hr)
Group 3 (intramuscular)	11	8	72.73 ^a	86.63±4.09 ^a (72-96 hr)

Means with different alphabetical superscripts are significantly different from each other at level ($P < 0.05$).

Table (2): Ovulation rate, 1st service conception and total conception rate in both treated and control buffalo – cows.

	Group 1 (pervaginum)		Group 2 (intravulvar)		Group 3 (intramuscular)		Group 4 (control)	
	exhibited estrus	not exhibited estrus	exhibited estrus	not exhibited estrus	exhibited estrus	not exhibited estrus	exhibited estrus	not exhibited estrus
Total number	7	5	8	2	8	3	10	-
Ovulation rate	7 (100%)	3 (60%)	8 (100%)	1 (50%)	8 (100%)	1(33.33%)	8 (80%)	-
1 st service conception	4 (57.14%)	1 (20%)	5 (62.50%)	1 (50%)	4 (50%)	1 (33.33%)	6 (60%)	6 (80%)
Total conception rate	6 (85.71%)	2 (40%)	7 (87.50%)	1 (50%)	6 (75%)	1 (33.33%)	7 (70%)	7 (70%)

Table 3: Plasma progesterone profiles (ng / ml) in subestrus buffaloes and normal cycling ones.

	Subestrus buffalo-cows				Normal cycling buffaloes (control)	
	Exhibited standing estrus		Not exhibited standing estrus		returned (n = 4)	non returned (n = 6)
Before treatment at luteal phase	Returned (n = 5)	non returned (n=18)	returned (n = 7)	non returned (n = 3)		
0-day of treatment	2.89 ^{cd} +0.83	2.99 ^{cb} +0.91	3.31 ^{bc} +0.87	3.73 ^{bc} +0.73	3.11 ^{bc} +0.98	3.33 ^{bc} +0.73
1 st day after treatment	3.10 ^{bc} +0.63	3.14 ^{bc} +0.66	2.99 ^c +0.73	3.31 ^{bc} +0.63	2.81 ^c +0.86	2.71 ^c +0.73
2 nd day after treatment	3.67 ^{bc} +0.68	3.88 ^{bc} +0.37	3.11 ^b +0.53	3.33 ^b +0.67	2.92 ^b +0.74	3.73 ^b +0.44
0-day of insemination	0.66 ^b +0.05	0.43 ^d +0.32	0.98 ^d +0.33	0.68 ^d +0.31	0.63 ^d +0.13	0.23 ^c +0.07
5 th day after insemination	3.34 ^b +0.77	3.63 ^b +0.89	3.78 ^{ab} +0.81	3.67 ^b +0.73	4.15 ^{ab} +0.35	4.13 ^{ab} +0.39
10 th day after insemination	4.88 ^{ah} +0.65	3.93 ^b +0.73	3.86 ^b +0.55	3.81 ^b +0.41	3.81 ^{ab} +0.89	3.83 ^b +0.31
15 th day after insemination	3.73 ^b +0.93	4.40 ^{ab} +1.32	4.81 ^{ab} +0.83	4.73 ^{ab} +0.81	4.64 ^{ab} +0.78	4.63 ^{ab} +0.46
20 th	0.68 ^d +0.05	6.84 ^a +1.35	0.73 ^d +0.63	6.34 ^{ab} +1.63	0.36 ^d +0.03	6.11 ^a +1.34
25 th	2.45 ^c +0.83	7.74 ^a +1.43	2.11 ^c +0.43	6.31 ^a +1.31	2.31 ^c +0.73	6.44 ^a +1.60
30 th	3.41 ^{bc} +0.93	7.77 ^a +1.53	2.45 ^c +0.73	6.93 ^a +1.40	3.13 ^{bc} +0.73	6.34 ^a +1.47

Means with different alphabetical superscripts are significantly different from each other at level (P < 0.05).