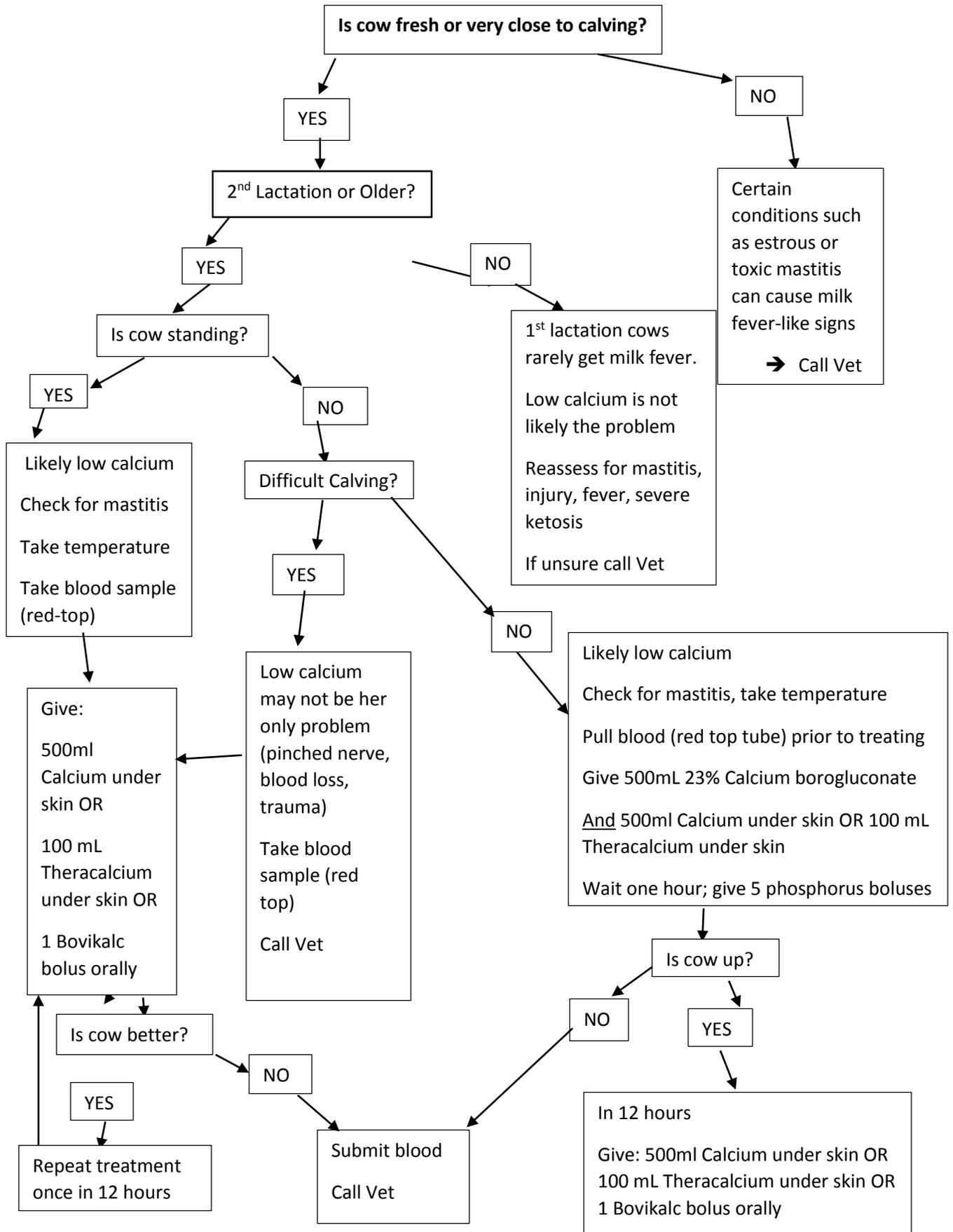


Milk Fever Decision Tree



Navan Veterinary Services

September 2014 Newsletter

Recently I was asked by a producer to help create a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the treatment or prevention of milk fever. The concern was that there was confusion regarding which product to use, how much and how frequent each should be used and in what situation.

There are currently several calcium preparations available, including oral products like tubed pastes/ gels or boluses (Bovikal^c). There are injectable combinations of long and slow release formulations like Theracalcium and the traditional 500mL bottle of straight 23% calcium borogluconate or calcium combined with dextrose and other elements like magnesium and phosphorus.

To add to the confusion, individual patients (cows) seem to respond slightly differently to any given treatment. Additionally, some cows will have concurrent drops in blood phosphorus levels which can further complicate treatments.

Decision trees are a handy form of SOPs that can help you make proper treatment decisions based on simple yes/no questions. Below is an example that can be used to aid in your milk fever treatment protocol.

The decision tree can be used for cows showing typical signs of milk fever. The use of oral products (gels, boluses) and Theracalcium can also be used as part of your preventative management protocol for older cows pre- or post-calving even if they are not exhibiting signs of low calcium. Talk to us if you want to start this or want to fine tune your current protocol.