**POST-OPERATIVE CARE**

The objective of this lab was to carry out anaesthesia with regional and local blocks, no surgery was done. So this document will explain post-operative care specific to this lab and also give general information on post-operative care.

**Immediate After Care**

Check the patients’ vital signs: temperature, pulse rate and respiration rate. In Group 1’s patient all vital signs returned to normal.

Animals recovering from anaesthesia may feel a bit weak as the sedation may not completely wear off after the procedure and so it is important to ensure that the patients are slowly walked or carried to a safe, hazardless area. The best thing to do is to get an animal into a shady wide open space where there are no objects to trip over or bounce into. Cattle are herd animals and so like to mimic each other’s behaviour, so it was important to wait until all patients were strong enough to stand and walk out of the area where the procedure was carried out.

**Recovery Period**

Recovery time is the time required for a patient to return to their usual condition or state following a procedure. The degree of aftercare required during this time varies widely, depending on the indication of the surgery. During this period the following factors should be monitored: signs of pain, attitude, hydration, TPR, appetite and physical appearance.

Where needed, care should include the administration of analgesics, antibiotics and supportive therapy. This lab required little after care, no drugs were needed and the animals could immediately return to their normal day to day activities.

**Possible Complications**

Problems specific to this lab that may arise includes those associated with Xylazine, which include:

* Excess salivation
* Reduced reticuloruminal activity
* Reduced cardiac sphincter tone
* Reduced swallowing
* Reduced laryngeal activity

These increase the risk of aspiration pneumonia from the inhalation of either saliva or rumen contents. This is why patients should be monitored for seven days after the lab.

Other possible complications include shock, drop in vital signs and death, but these are usually indicated in unhealthy patients.

**Client Education**

It is important to:

* Inform the client of any complications or side effects that may occur due to procedures.
* Inform the client if there are any drugs needed to be given to the patient after the procedure and the reason for use of each drug and common side effects that may occur.
* Inform the client of the dosage regimen of any drugs needed.
* Inform the client to keep the patient as comfortable as possible
* Inform the client of expected recovery time
* Exchange contact information.

Where food animal patients are involved it is important to inform the client when the animals can be used as a source of food based on the withdrawal intervals of drugs used during pre-op, intra-op and post-op.

Withdrawal periods for the following drugs in dairy cattle are:

* Lidocaine is 3 days
* Tolazoline is 2 days
* Xylazine is 24 hours