**Hernias**

Hernias involving the abdominal wall include umbilical, inguinal or scrotal.

Umbilical hernias are secondary to failure of the normal closure of the umbilical ring and result in protrusion of the abdominal contents into the overlying subcutis. Size varies depending on the extent of the umbilical defect and the amount of abdominal contents contained within it. The aetiology in both large and small animals is likely to have a genetic component; however, excess traction on an oversized fetus or cutting the umbilical cord too close to the abdominal wall are other possible causes.

Diagnosis is usually straightforward, especially if the hernia is manually reducible. If reducible the hernia must be differentiated from an umbilical abscess, which is common in large animals. Umbilical hernias and umbilical abscesses may be seen together, especially in cattle and swine. Exploratory puncture, such as via fine needle biopsy with cytopathology may be required for confirmation. Correction is surgical.

The owner should be advised that the weakness is heritable.