UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL FLUMINENSE FACULDADE DE VETERINÁRIA PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM MEDICINA VETERINÁRIA (CLÍNICA E REPRODUÇÃO ANIMAL)

VIVIAN ANGÉLICO PEREIRA ALFRADIQUE

EFEITO *IN VITRO* DO FLUIDO E CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO BOVINO NA FASE FOLICULAR OU LUTEAL NA FUNÇÃO E CAPACITAÇÃO DE ESPERMATOZOIDES OVINOS

NITERÓI

2018

VIVIAN ANGÉLICO PEREIRA ALFRADIQUE

EFEITO *IN VITRO* DO FLUIDO E CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO BOVINO NA FASE FOLICULAR OU LUTEAL NA FUNÇÃO E CAPACITAÇÃO DE ESPERMATOZOIDES OVINOS

Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Medicina Veterinária (Clínica e Reprodução Animal) da Universidade Federal Fluminense, como requisito parcial para aprovação a obtenção do título de Mestre em Medicina Veterinária.

Área de Concentração: Clínica e Reprodução Animal.

Orientador:

Prof. Dr. Felipe Zandonadi Brandão

Coorientadores:

Prof^a. Dr^a. Joanna Maria Gonçalves de Souza-Fabjan

Prof. Dr. Ribrio Ivan Tavares Pereira Batista

Niterói, RJ

2018

VIVIAN ANGÉLICO PEREIRA ALFRADIQUE

EFEITO *IN VITRO* DO FLUIDO E CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO BOVINO NA FASE FOLICULAR OU LUTEAL NA FUNÇÃO E CAPACITAÇÃO DE ESPERMATOZOIDES OVINOS

Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Medicina Veterinária (Clínica e Reprodução Animal) da Universidade Federal Fluminense, como requisito parcial para aprovação a obtenção do título de Mestre em Medicina Veterinária.

Área de Concentração: Clínica e Reprodução Animal.

BANCA EXAMINADORA

Prof. Dr. Felipe Zandonadi Brandão – UFF Orientador

Prof. Dr. José Domingos Guimarães - UFV

Prof. Dr. Rodrigo Vasconcelos de Oliveira – UFRRJ

Niterói 2018

Dedico a todos os meus mentores, que compartilharam comigo o seu conhecimento durante a minha trajetória acadêmica.

AGRADECIMENTOS

Ao Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) pelo financiamento da bolsa de estudo durante o mestrado.

A Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Faperj) e à Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (Finep) pelo financiamento a este projeto.

A Deus, por ter me abençoado durante toda a minha trajetória e por toda a fé pela qual me foi depositada em persistir e continuar esta caminhada.

Aos meus familiares, por terem acreditado em minha capacidade para atingir meus objetivos e pelo incentivo dado em persistir na minha qualificação na vida acadêmica.

Ao meu orientador, Prof. Dr. Felipe Zandonadi Brandão, por me aceitar como orientada, pelo incentivo, pelas oportunidades de aprendizado, pelo apoio e por ter comprado as minhas ideias na realização deste projeto.

Aos meus coorientadores, Prof^a. Dr^a. Joanna Maria Gonçalves de Souza-Fabjan e o Prof. Dr. Ribrio Ivan Tavares Pereira Batista, que me acompanharam desde da época da graduação. Palavras não são suficientes para demonstrar o quão grata eu sou de ter tido vocês dois como coorientadores. Primeiramente, por terem me ensinado que o que move a ciência não são as respostas e sim as perguntas. Pelos ensinamentos, parceria no laboratório, *brain storms* que surgiam durante nossas reuniões que ajudaram muito neste projeto, pelo incentivo, por acreditarem na minha capacidade de conduzir este projeto, por sempre estarem dispostos (mesmo estando super ocupados) a solucionarem os problemas que surgiam durante os experimentos, pelo estímulo ao senso crítico e por serem mais do que coorientadores, pesquisadores que tenho profunda admiração e serem meus exemplos de pesquisadores no qual me espelho em me tornar um dia.

À minha amiga e mentora, Carolina Cerqueira Sarmento Olivares, por todo conhecimento a que me foi passado durante meu período como estagiária até ao mestrado. Sem você eu não iria ser capaz de conduzir meus experimentos e ter produzido esta dissertação. Agradeço as palavras de amizade, incentivo, boas risadas e histórias no laboratório.

À minha amiga, Helena Fabiana Reis de Almeida Saraiva, pelo apoio, amizade e pelas conversas e trocas de ideias em nossos happy hours no anexo depois de um dia cansativo no laboratório. Sister que ganhei na ciência e levo pra vida.

Aos meus amigos do grupo de pesquisa, em especial a Gláucia Mota Bragança, Luana Rangel Côrtes e Clara Vieira de Souza, pelo empenho na realização dos experimentos e por me fazerem rir mesmo nos momentos mais desesperadores no experimento ("Vivian, a fluorescência não tá funcionando! O CASA não tá lendo"). Com total certeza sem vocês as baterias de experimentos não seriam as mesmas.

Aos técnicos da UFF, Mário Felipe Alvarez Balaro, Eduardo Kenji Nunes Arashiro e Lendel Correia da Costa, pelo auxilio e apoio na realização dos experimentos. Ao Mário, pelo treinamento na coleta de sêmen, adaptação e manejo dos animais utilizados no estudo e pela troca de ideia na estatística. Ao Arashiro, muito obrigada pelo auxílio na estatística, pelas discussões e aprendizados compartilhados e por ter me incentivado a dar o primeiro passo para começar a entender essa ciência tão complexa, chamada estatística. Ao Lendel, por me ajudar e muito durante as rotinas de cultura de células, ter me esclarecido dúvidas e ter me ensinado tanto. Eternamente grata a vocês.

Aos professores do Setor de Reprodução Animal da UFF, em especial ao Prof. Dr. André Luís Rios Rodrigues, pelas palavras, sabedoria e pela preocupação e motivação durante os experimentos. Obrigada professor por ser um anjo da guarda nessa trajetória.

Ao Dr. Luiz Sérgio de Almeida Camargo, por permitir usássemos a infraestrutura laboratorial do Laboratório de Reprodução Animal da Embrapa Gado de Leite (Juiz de Fora, MG) durante as coletas de fluido do oviduto e células epiteliais do oviduto.

Talvez não tenha conseguido fazer o melhor, mas lutei para que o melhor fosse feito. Não sou o que deveria ser, mas Graças a Deus, não sou o que era antes.

Martin Luther King

RESUMO

O fluido do oviduto (FO) desempenha importante função na capacitação espermática e fertilização. Ainda, as células epiteliais do oviduto (CEO) interagem com o espermatozoide (SPZ) prolongando a sua vida útil. Evidências na literatura sugerem que o FO varia de acordo com a fase do ciclo estral, no entanto, pouco se sabe sobre os efeitos dessa variação na função espermática. Assim, o objetivo do estudo foi avaliar o efeito do FO da fase folicular e luteal e a interação do SPZ com CEO na modulação da função espermática e dos processos de capacitação/reação acrossômica (RA). Para alcançar esse objetivo, dois experimentos foram realizados. Para isso, FO na fase folicular e luteal (classificação baseada na morfologia ovariana) e CEO foram obtidas de ovidutos de vacas oriundas de matadouro. Para ambos os experimentos, após a técnica de swim-up (pool de três carneiros), os SPZ foram distribuídos aleatoriamente nos grupos experimentais. No experimento 1, 8 x 10⁶ SPZ/mL foram adicionados ao meio: i) Fert-TALP (controle positivo), ii) Fert-TALP sem indutores da capacitação espermática (Fert-TALP modificado; controle negativo), iii) Fert-TALP modificado, suplementado com 10% de FO da fase folicular ou iv) Fert-TALP modificado, suplementado com 10% de FO na fase luteal. No experimento 2, para mimetizar as condições do oviduto durante a fase folicular e luteal, as CEO foram cultivadas no meio TCM-199, suplementada com 10% de soro fetal bovino até a confluência. Previamente (24 h) ao cocultivo com SPZ, foi realizada a indução das condições luteal e folicular pela suplementação dos hormônios 17 β-estradiol (E2) e progesterona (P4) no meio nas concentrações detectadas no oviduto durante estas fases. Para o cocultivo, 8 x 10⁶ SPZ/mL foram adicionados na presença da monocamada de CEO: i) CEO fase folicular - cocultivo de SPZ e CEO no meio Fert-TALP, com suplementação de 290 pg/mL E2 e 6 ng/mL P4 (concentração similar a fase folicular); ii) CEO fase luteal - cocultivo de SPZ e CEO no meio Fert-TALP, com suplementação de 80 pg/mL E2 e 85 ng/mL P4 (concentração similar a fase luteal); iii) cultivo de SPZ no meio Fert-TALP, com suplementação de 290 pg/mL de E2 e 6 ng/mL P4 e iv) cultivo de SPZ no meio Fert-TALP, com suplementação de 80 pg/mL E2 e 85 ng/mL P4. Para o grupo controle positivo, foi utilizado o meio Fert-TALP convencional. Os SPZ foram incubados a 38 °C em 5% de CO₂ e os parâmetros da cinemática espermática, integridade da membrana plasmática (MP) e status da capacitação espermática foram avaliados após 0, 2, 4, 6 e 18 e 24 h. As variáveis foram submetidas ao teste two-way ANOVA com medidas repetidas (Bonferroni; P < 0.05). Os resultados do Experimento 1, mostraram que a incubação de até 4 h com FO independente do estágio do ciclo estral promoveu aumento na maioria dos parâmetros da cinemática espermática de forma similar (P > 0,05) ao grupo controle positivo, enquanto que no Experimento 2, esses parâmetros foram reduzidos (P < 0,05) pelo co-cultivo entre SPZ e CEO, independente do estágio do ciclo estral. A integridade da MP não foi afetada (P > 0,05) pela incubação com FO e CEO na fase folicular ou luteal. Incubação com FO independente do estágio do ciclo estral apresentou maior (P < 0,05) taxa de RA em comparação ao grupo controle negativo após longo tempo de incubação (18-24 h) enquanto que a interação das CEO (folicular ou luteal) reduziu (P < 0.05) a taxa de capacitação espermática em comparação ao grupo controle positivo ao longo da incubação. Conclui-se que utilizando a espécie ovina como modelo, a adição do FO na fase folicular ou luteal promove um aumento na cinemática espermática até 4 h de incubação e na taxa de RA após 18-24 h, enguanto que a interação das CEO com SPZ reduz a cinemática espermática e atrasa a capacitação espermática in vitro.

Palavras-chave: sêmen ovino; função espermática; ciclo estral; tuba uterina;

ABSTRACT

Oviduct fluid (OF) provides a suitable environment for the sperm capacitation and fertilization. Still, oviductal epithelial cell (OEC) interacts with sperm prolonging sperm lifespan. Evidences on literature suggest that OF varies according to the stage of estrous cycle, however, there are only few reports about the effect of this variation on sperm function. Thus, the objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of OF at follicular and luteal phases and the interaction of sperm with OEC on the modulation of sperm function and capacitation/acrosome react (AR) processes. To achieve this goal, two experiments were performed. For this, OF at follicular and luteal phases (classification based on ovarian morphology) and OEC were obtained from cow oviducts at a slaughterhouse. For both experiments, after swim-up technique (pool of three rams) sperm were randomly distributed in the experimental groups. In Experiment 1, 8 x 10⁶ sperm/mL were added in the medium: i) Fert-TALP (positive control), ii) Fert-TALP without capacitating substance (modified Fert-TALP; negative control), iii) modified Fert-TALP supplemented with 10% of OF at follicular phase or iv) modified Fert-TALP supplemented with 10% of OF at luteal phase. In Experiment 2, to mimic oviductal conditions during the follicular and luteal phases, the OECs were cultured in TCM-199 medium supplemented with 10% of fetal bovine serum until confluence. Previously (24 h) to co-culture with sperm, the follicular and luteal conditions were induced by supplementation of 17beta-estradiol (E2) and progesterone (P4) hormones in the Fert-TALP medium, at concentrations detected in the oviduct during these phases. For co-culture, 8 x 10⁶ sperm/mL were added in the presence of OEC monolayer: i) OEC follicular phase - co-culture of sperm and OEC in Fert-TALP medium supplemented with 290 pg/mL E2 and 6 ng/mL P4 (concentration) similar to follicular phase); ii) OEC luteal phase - co-culture of sperm and OEC in Fert-TALP medium supplemented with 80 pg/mL E2 and 85 ng/mL P4 (concentration similar to luteal phase); iii) sperm culture in Fert-TALP medium supplemented with 290 pg/mL E2 and 6 ng/mL P4 and iv) sperm culture in Fert-TALP medium supplemented with 80 pg/mL E2 and 85 ng/mL P4. The positive control was the conventional Fert-TALP medium. Sperm were incubated at 38 °C in 5% CO₂ and the parameters of sperm kinematics, plasma membrane (PM) integrity and sperm capacitation status were evaluated after 0, 2, 4, 6, 18 and 24 h. The variables were subjected to a repeated measure two-way ANOVA (Bonferroni; P < 0.05). The results of the Experiment 1 showed that incubation up to four hours with OF regardless the stage of estrous cycle promoted an increase in most of kinematic parameters similar (P > 0.05) to the positive control group while in Experiment 2, co-culture between sperm and OEC, regardless the stage of estrous cycle, reduced (P < 0.05) these kinematic parameters. The PM integrity was not affected (P > 0.05) by incubation with OF and OEC at follicular or luteal phase. Incubation with OF regardless the phase of estrous cycle presented higher (P < 0.05) AR rate compared to the negative control group after a long-time incubation (18-24 h), while the interaction of OEC (either follicular or luteal stage) reduced (P < 0.05) sperm capacitation rate compare to positive control group throughout incubation. It is concluded that the supplementation with OF either at follicular or luteal stage into the medium, promotes an increase in the sperm kinematic for up to 4 h of incubation and AR rate after 18-24 h. In contrast, interaction between sperm and OEC reduce sperm kinematics and delay sperm capacitation in vitro using the ovine specie as a model.

Keywords: ram sperm; sperm function; estrous cycle; uterine tube;

SUMÁRIO

1 INTRODUÇÃO, p. 21

2 CAPÍTULO I – REVISÃO DE LITERAURA, p. 23

2.1 CARACTERÍSTICAS ANATÔMO-FISIOLÓGICAS DO SISTEMA REPRODUTOR FEMININO, p. 23

2.2 ESTEROIDES: REGULADORES CHAVE NO AMBIENTE DO OVIDUTO, p.24

2.3 FLUIDO DO OVIDUTO, p. 26

2.4 CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO, p. 27

2.5 PRODUÇÃO IN VITRO DE EMBRIÕES, p. 28

2.6 CAPACITAÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA, REAÇÃO ACROSSÔMICA E

FECUNDAÇÃO, p. 29

2.7 INDUTORES DA CAPACITAÇÃO IN VITRO, p. 34

3 HIPÓTESES CIENTÍFICAS, p. 35

4 OBJETIVOS, p. 36

- 4.1 OBJETIVO GERAL, p. 36
- 4.2 OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS, p. 36

5 MATERIAL E MÉTODOS, p. 37

- 5.1 REAGENTES, p. 37
- 5.2 CLASSIFICAÇÃO DO OVIDUTO, p. 37
- 5.3 OBTENÇÃO DO FLUIDO DO OVIDUTO DE VACA, p. 39
- 5.4 OBTENÇÃO E CULTIVO DAS CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO DE

VACA, p. 39

- 5.5 COLETA E PROCESSAMENTO DE SÊMEN, p. 40
- 5.6 RESFRIAMENTO DO SÊMEN, p. 40
- 5.7 SELEÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA, p. 41
- 5.8 ANÁLISE DA CINÉTICA ESPERMÁTICA, p. 41
- 5.9 INTEGRIDADE DA MEMBRANA PLASMÁTICA, p. 42

5.10 TAXA DE CAPACITAÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA, p. 42

5.11 ANÁLISE ESTATÍSTICA, p. 43

6 CAPÍTULO II – THE PHASES OF ESTROUS CYCLE DO NOT INFLUENCE THE POSITIVE EFFECT OF HETEROLOGOUS OVIDUCTAL FLUID ON OVINE SPERM KINEMATICS OR THE ACROSOME REACTION PROCESS, p. 44

6.1 CONTENTS, p. 46

6.2 INTRODUCTION, p. 46

6.3 MATERIAL AND METHODS, p. 48

6.3.1 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN ETHICS, p. 48

6.3.2 ETHICS, p. 48

6.3.3 REAGENTS, p. 48

6.3.4 OVIDUCT CLASSIFICATION AND BOF COLLECTION, p. 48

6.3.5 SEMEN COLLECTION AND PROCESSING, p. 49

6.3.6 EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS AND INCUBATION OF RAM SPERMATOZOA

WITH OR WITHOUT BOF, p. 50

6.3.7 SPERM KINEMATICS, p. 51

6.3.8 SPERM PM INTEGRITY, p. 51

6.3.9 SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS, p. 52

6.3.10 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, p. 52

6.4 RESULTS, p. 53

6.4.1 EFFECT OF BOF AT THE FOLLICULAR OR THE LUTEAL PHASE ON SPERM KINEMATICS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 53

6.4.2 EFFECT OF BOF AT THE FOLLICULAR OR THE LUTEAL PHASE ON SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS AND SPERM PM INTEGRITY DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 53

6.4.3 EFFECT OF TREATMENT AND INCUBATION TIME AND THEIRINTERACTION ON SPERM PARAMETERS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 546.5 DISCUSSION, p. 54

6.6 REFERENCES, p. 57

7 CAPÍTULO III – SUPPLEMENTATION OF 17β-ESTRADIOL AND PROGESTERONE AT CONCENTRATIONS OF THE FOLLICULAR AND LUTEAL PHASE IN THE CO-CULTURE MEDIUM OF BOVINE OVIDUCTAL EPITHELIAL CELLS AND OVINE SPERMATOZOA REDUCES THE SPERM KINEMATICS AND

- CAPACITATION, p. 68
- 7.1. ABSTRACT, p. 70
- 7.2 INTRODUCTION, p. 70
- 7.3 MATERIAL AND METHODS, p. 72
- 7.3.1 ETHICS, p. 72
- 7.3.2 REAGENTS, p. 72
- 7.3.3 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN, p. 72
- 7.3.4 MEDIA, p. 73
- 7.3.4.1 BOEC culture medium, p. 73
- 7.3.4.2 Sperm-BOEC co-culture medium, p. 74
- 7.3.4.3 Positive control group medium, p. 74
- 7.3.4.4 Negative control groups media, p. 74
- 7.3.5 HORMONAL TREATMENTS, p. 74
- 7.3.6 BOEC CULTURE, p. 75
- 7.3.7 SEMEN COLLECTION AND COOLING PROCESS, p. 76
- 7.3.8 SPERM SELECTION (SWIM-UP TECHINIQUE), p. 76
- 7.3.9 RATE OF RAM SPERM BOUND TO BOEC, p. 76
- 7.3.10 SPERM KINEMATICS, p. 77
- 7.3.11 SPERM PM INTEGRITY, p. 77
- 7.3.12 SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS, p. 78
- 7.3.13 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, p. 78
- 7.4 RESULTS, p. 79

7.4.1 GENERAL ASPECTS OF BOEC MORPHOLOGY DURING CULTURE, p. 79 7.4.2 EFFECT OF TREATMENT, TIME AND THEIR INTERACTION ON SPERM PARAMETERS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 79

- 7.4.3 EFFECT OF BOEC AT EITHER FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL PHASE CO-
- CULTURE ON SPERM KINEMATICS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 79
- 7.4.3.1 Ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC vs unbound ram spermatozoa, p. 80

7.4.4 EFFECT OF BOEC AT EITHER FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL PHASE CO-

CULTURE ON CAPACITATION STATUS AND SPERM PM INTEGRITY DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H, p. 80

7.4.4.1 Ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC vs unbound ram spermatozoa, p. 81

7.4.5 RATE OF RAM SPERM BOUND TO BOEC AT FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL
PHASE DURING 24 H OF INCUBATION, p. 81
7.5 DISCUSSION, p. 81
7.6 CONCLUSIONS, p. 84
7.7 REFERENCES, p. 85

8 CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS, p. 101

Referências Bibliográficas, p. 103

9 ANEXO, p. 112

9.1 APROVAÇÃO PELO COMITÊ DE ÉTICA NO USO DE ANIMAIS DA UFF, p. 112

LISTA DE ILUSTRAÇÕES

- Quadro 1 Classificação da morfologia ovariana durante o ciclo estral de vacas utilizada no Experimento 1 (Adaptado de Ireland; Murphee; Coulson, 1980), f. 38
- Fig. 1 Patterns of the sperm capacitation status assessed using (Cap. II) chlortetracycline (CTC) staining, f. 64
- Fig. 2 Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or
 (Cap. II) the luteal (LbOF) phase on ram sperm motility [total motility (a) and progressive motility (b)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation and parameters were evaluated using a CASA system. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media, f. 65
- Fig. 3 Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or
 (Cap. II) the luteal (LbOF) phase on ram sperm kinematics [VAP (a; average path velocity), VCL (b; curvilinear velocity), VSL (c; straight-line velocity), LIN (d; linearity (ratio VSL/VCL)), STR (e; straightness (ratio VSL/VAP)), ALH (f; amplitude of lateral head displacement) and BCF (g; beat/cross frequency)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation and parameters were evaluated using a CASA system. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media, f. 66
- Fig. 4Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or(Cap. III)the luteal (LbOF) phase on the sperm capacitation status and plasma
membrane integrity of ram spermatozoa [rate of capacitated sperm

(a; B pattern), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm (b; AR pattern), rate of non-capacitated sperm (c) and rate of intact cells (d; F pattern)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media, f. 67

- Fig. 5 Experimental design of the study. Effect of bovine oviductal epithelial
 (Cap. III) cell (BOEC) on ram sperm function and capacitation status during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂, f. 96
- Fig. 6 Light micrographs of bovine oviductal epithelial cells (BOEC) in
 (Cap. III) monolayer culture. (a) BOEC primary line after 2 days of culture presenting cell aggregates (arrows) capable to form vesicles (arrowheads) that float in the culture medium. (b) Confluent monolayer of BOEC primary line after 7 days of culture showing a typical epithelial morphology with highly packed polygonal cells. (c) BOEC frozen/thawed after 2 days of culture showing a non-covered area. (d) Confluent monolayer of BOEC frozen/thawed after 7 days of culture f. 97
- Fig. 7 Effect of bovine oviductal epithelial cells either at follicular (Follicular (Cap. III) BOEC) or luteal (Luteal BOEC) stage on ram sperm capacitation status and sperm plasma membrane integrity [rate of capacitated sperm (a), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm (b), rate of noncapacitated sperm (c) and rate of intact cells (d)] during incubation for 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were made after 1 h (except sperm plasma membrane integrity), 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM. Different letters indicate differences (p<0.05) among treatments by Bonferroni test. f. 98

Fig. 8 Sperm capacitation status of ram spermatozoa of bound and (Cap. III) unbound spermatozoa in co-culture with bovine oviductal epithelial cells either at follicular (Follicular BOEC) or luteal (Luteal BOEC) phase [rate of capacitated sperm at follicular phase (a), rate of capacitated sperm at luteal phase (b), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm at follicular phase (c), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm at luteal phase (d) rate of noncapacitated sperm at luteal phase (e) and rate of noncapacitated sperm at luteal phase (f)] during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyzes were made after 1 h, 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (p<0.05) among treatments by Bonferroni test, f. 99

Fig. 9 Rate of ram sperm bound to BOEC either at follicular or luteal phase
(Cap. III) during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyzes were made after 1 h, 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM, f. 100

LISTA DE TABELAS

- TABLE 1 Two-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) on
 (CAP. II) sperm parameters considering incubation time and treatment as independent variables , f. 62
- TABLE 2 Repeated measures two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on
 (CAP. III) sperm parameters considering incubation time and treatment as independent variables, f. 91
- TABLE 3 –Sperm kinematics of ram spermatozoa receiving different treatments(CAP. III)during long-time incubation (Mean ± SEM), f. 93

LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS, SIGLAS E SÍMBOLOS

PIVE	Produção <i>in vitro</i> de embriões
CEO	Células epiteliais do oviduto
FO	Fluido do oviduto
FIV	Fertilização <i>in vitro</i>
G6PD	Glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (glicose-6-fosfato
	desidrogenase)
SOD2	Superoxide dismutase 2 (superóxido dismutase 2)
E2	17 β-estradiol
P4	Progesterone (progesterona)
ATP	Trifosfato de adenosina
CL	Corpus luteum (corpo lúteo)
LOPU	Laparoscopic ovum pick-up (colheita de oócitos por
	laparoscopia)
MI∨	Maturação <i>in vitro</i>
DIV	Desenvolvimento in vitro
TCM-199	Tissue culture medium 199
FSH	Hormônio folículo estimulante
LH	Hormônio luteinizante
SFB	Soro fetal bovino
AMPc	Adenosina 3',5'-monofosfato cíclico
Na ⁺	Íon sódio
HCO ₃ -	Íon bicarbonato
SACY	Adenil ciclase insensível a proteína G
РКА	Proteína quinase A
BSA	Bovine serum albumin (albumina sérica bovina)
HDL	Lipoproteína de alta densidade
ZP	Zona pelúcida
EBPs	Egg binding proteins
PLC	Fosfolipase C
IP3	Inositol-3,4,5-trifosfato

DAG	Diacilglicerol
AC	Adenilato cyclase
РКС	Proteína quinase C
SNAREs	Soluble N-Ethylmaleimide-sensitive factor attachment receptor
Rab3A GTPase	Rab-3A enzima trifosfato de guanosina
CD9	Gene que codifica um membro da família tetraspanina
ΡLCζ	Fosfolipase c zeta
MP	Membrana plasmática
ON	Óxido nítrico
NOS	Óxido nítrico sintase
СТС	Chlortetracycline (clortetraciclina)
CEUA	Comitê de Ética no Uso de Animais
DPBS	Dulbecco's Phosphate Buffered Saline (tampão fosfato- salino de Dulbecco)
PBS	Phosphate Buffered Saline (tampão fosfato-salino)
CASA	Computer Assisted Sperm Analyses
SCA	Sperm Class Analyser
VCL	Curvilinear velocity (velocidade curvilinear)
STR	Straightness (retilinearidade)
VAP	Average path velocity (velocidade média da trajetória)
VSL	Straight-line velocity (velocidade linear progressive)
LIN	Linearity (linearidade)
WOB	<i>Wobble</i> (taxa de oscilação)
ALH	Amplitude of lateral head displacement (amplitude de deslocamento lateral da cabeça)
BCF	<i>Beat/cross frequency</i> (frequência de batimento flagelar cruzado)
DABCO	1,4 diazabiciclo [2.2.2.] octane
BV-2A	<i>Blue-violet 2A</i> (azul-violeta 2A)
SAEG	Sistemas para análises estatísticas
EPM	Erro padrão de média
One-way ANOVA	<i>One-way analysis of variance</i> (análise de variância com um fator)
OF	Oviductal fluid

bOF	Bovine oviductal fluid
FbOF	Bovine oviductal fluid at follicular stage
LbOF	Bovine oviductal fluid at luteal stage
POSControl	Positive control
NEGControl	Negative control
ARTs	Assisted reproductive technologies
ARRIVE	Animal Research: Reporting of In vivo Experiments
IVF	in vitro fertilization
ATB/ATM	Antibiotic/Antimycotic
РМ	Plasma membrane
ТМ	Total motility (motilidade total)
РМ	Progressive motility (motilidade progressiva)
SEM	Standard error of the mean
AR	Acrosome reaction
Finep	Financiadora de estudos e projetos
Faperj	Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de
	Janeiro
CNPq	Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e
	Tecnológico
CAPES	Coordenação de Aperfeicoamento de Pessoal de
	nível Superior
050	
Dec	
BUEC	
Follicular NEGControl	Follicular negative control
Luteal NEGControl	Luteal negative control
FCS	Heat-treated foetal calf serum
DMSO	Dimethyl sulfoxide

1 INTRODUÇÃO

O Brasil possui cerca de 18,4 milhões de cabeças ovinas em toda a sua extensão, sendo que as regiões que apresentam maior concentração são Nordeste (60,5 %) e Sul (26,5 %). As regiões que têm se destacado pela crescente exploração com fins econômicos são o Sudeste, Sul e Centro-Oeste. Dentro da região Sudeste, o Estado do Rio de Janeiro é um dos Estados onde a criação de ovinos encontra-se em expansão, visto que tem ocorrido aumento gradual no número de ovinos existentes no estado ao decorrer desta última década (IBGE, Pesquisa Pecuária Municipal, 2015).

O crescimento da ovinocultura estimula o desenvolvimento de biotécnicas da reprodução assistida, com a finalidade de aumentar os índices produtivos, concomitantemente ao progresso genético (CROCOMO et al., 2012). Dentre as tecnologias reprodutivas, a produção *in vitro* de embriões (PIVE), permite a maior produção de descendentes, principalmente daqueles animais de elevado mérito genético, reduzindo assim o intervalo entre gerações, otimizando a eficiência reprodutiva e o melhoramento genético. De acordo com o que foi revisado por Paramio et al. (2016), em pequenos ruminantes as taxas de PIVE ainda apresentam resultados baixos e inconsistentes, sendo necessário mais estudos nesta área na tentativa de otimizar o processo.

Neste âmbito, os eventos que são mimetizados durante a PIVE, ocorrem principalmente no oviduto. Em mamíferos, o oviduto fornece o microambiente ideal para ocorrência dos eventos de fertilização e desenvolvimento embrionário inicial. Este microambiente é formado pelas células epiteliais do oviduto (CEO), que recobrem a superfície interna do epitélio do oviduto e pelo fluido do oviduto (FO), presente no lúmen deste órgão (ROMAR et al., 2001). A compreensão do processo de produção *in vivo* de embrião, por meio do conhecimento preciso do que os gametas e embrião necessitam, e de que forma estes interagem com compostos e células presentes no microambiente do oviduto, é fundamental para melhorar a eficiência das técnicas de reprodução assistida, incluindo a PIVE (revisado por AVILES; COY; RIZOS, 2015).

Na tentativa de mimetizar as condições do oviduto com objetivo de melhorar a eficiência nos parâmetros da PIVE, estudos recentes desenvolveram estratégias de suplementação no meio de fertilização in vitro (FIV). Estudo de Cebrian-Serrano et al. (2013) mostrou que a coincubação do FO de vaca com o oócito por 30 min antes da FIV, resulta em blastocistos com maior expressão dos genes glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD; considerado sentinela para espécies reativas de oxigênio) superoxide dismutase 2 (SOD2; relacionado com a atividade mitocondrial e boa qualidade de embrião). No ponto de vista do efeito no espermatozoide, a incubação do FO de suíno na fase pré-ovulatória com espermatozoide de suíno por um curto tempo (entre 5-60 min) aumentou a cinética espermática, além de ter promovido alterações similares ao processo de capacitação (KUMARESAN et al., 2014). Além disso, Romar et al. (2001) utilizando a espécie suína como modelo, mostraram que cocultivo prévio à FIV, entre CEO e oócitos por 4 h, resultou em maior taxa de penetração monoespérmica. Do mesmo modo, Dubuc e Sirard (1995) reportaram que o cocultivo entre CEO e espermatozoide suíno por 30 min resultou em uma redução na taxa de poliespermia e um aumento na taxa de fertilização. Todavia, na espécie ovina existem poucas informações sobre o efeito da interação entre os gametas e o microambiente do oviduto na função espermática e oocitária. O objetivo desta dissertação foi avaliar o efeito da secreção luteal e folicular e a interação espermatozoide-CEO na modulação da função espermática e nos processos de capacitação/reação acrossômica (RA), com o intuito de otimizar a eficiência de diferentes técnicas de reprodução assistida.

2 CAPÍTULO I – REVISÃO DE LITERATURA

2.1 CARACTERÍSTICAS ANATÓMO-FISIOLÓGICAS DO SISTEMA REPRODUTOR FEMININO

Os órgãos que compõem o sistema reprodutivo feminino são: vulva, vagina, útero (incluindo a cérvix), tuba uterina (conhecido como oviduto em não primatas) e ovário. Os ovários estão localizados na cavidade abdominal e se divide em duas regiões principais: a medula (região externa onde estão presentes os vasos e nervos que nutrem o oócito durante o seu desenvolvimento) e córtex (região interna – onde encontra-se o epitélio germinativo no qual ocorre o processo de oogênese) (revisado por GHEORGHISAN-GALATEANU; HINESCU; ENCIU, 2014). Durante o ciclo estral, que em vacas dura cerca de 21 dias, o ovário sofre grandes alterações reguladas por hormônios que atuam em sistema de *feedbacks* positivo e negativo (revisado por FORDE et al., 2011).

A vagina é um tubo longo de parede distensível que parte da cérvix até a entrada da uretra (DYCE; SACK; WENSING, 2010). Em ruminantes, o sêmen é depositado na vagina durante o acasalamento. O muco vaginal, uma secreção biológica complexa, é o primeiro meio no gual o espermatozoide encontra e atua como uma barreira, pelo qual o espermatozoide deve ultrapassar para alcançar o útero (revisado por RUTLLANT; LÓPEZ-BÉJAR; LÓPEZ-GATIUS, 2005). Continuamente, o espermatozoide alcança a cérvix, um canal constrito de parede espessa, que se apresenta como a primeira barreira física, responsável pela seleção espermática de até 70% dos espermatozoides (revisado por KÖLLE, 2015). Assim como o muco vaginal, o muco cervical apresenta alta viscosidade, o que faz com que o espermatozoide aumente a cinética espermática para que possa alcançar o local da fertilização (revisado por SUAREZ, 2016). Fluidos dos órgãos reprodutivos feminino apresentam alterações físico-químicas durante o ciclo estral. O muco cervical se torna aquoso e menos viscoso durante a fase folicular, facilitando a passagem dos espermatozoides (revisado por RUTLLANT; LÓPEZ-BÉJAR; LÓPEZ-GATIUS, 2005). Em ruminantes, o útero apresenta em sua parte cranial, os cornos uterinos que continuamente conectam-se com as tubas uterinas, e em sua parte caudal, se abrem na vagina (DYCE; SACK; WENSING, 2010). Este órgão é responsável em nutrir o

embrião e, eventualmente o concepto, por meio de suas secreções que proporcionam o microambiente adequado para o contínuo desenvolvimento embrionário (revisado por BRIDGES et al., 2013). Além disso, do ponto de vista do processo de seleção espermática, granulócitos neutrofílicos por meio de fagocitose contribuem para este processo (TAYLOR et al., 2008).

O oviduto é um órgão seromuscular tubular conectado ao ovário, em sua porção distal, e ao útero em sua porção proximal, no qual eventos reprodutivos iniciais ocorrem. Este órgão se divide em quatro regiões: infundíbulo, ampola, istmo e junção úterotubárica (revisado por GHERSEVICH et al., 2015). Pequena porcentagem de espermatozoides consegue alcançar a região do istmo. Isto ocorre devido a uma seleção crítica durante a migração espermática feita pela junção úterotubárica (TOKUHIRO et al., 2012). Ao alcançar a região do istmo, o espermatozoide liga-se as CEO formando a reserva espermática e esta ligação é mantida até o momento da ovulação. A região do infundíbulo apresenta fímbrias que recobrem o ovário, e ao ocorrer a ovulação, o complexo *cumulus*-oócito é captado pelos cílios que recobrem a superfície externa do infundíbulo (revisado por TALBOT; SHUR; MYLES, 2003). A ampola do oviduto é o local onde ocorre o processo de fertilização, e em seguida, com auxílio das contrações musculares e batimentos ciliares, o embrião direciona-se ao istmo até alcançar o útero, no estágio de 16 células (revisado por MAILLO et al., 2016).

2.2 ESTEROIDES: REGULADORES CHAVE NO AMBIENTE DO OVIDUTO

O ciclo reprodutivo em mamíferos pode ser dividido em dois principais estágios: folicular (pré-ovulatório) ou luteal (pós-ovulatório). Esta classificação leva em consideração as flutuações na concentração de esteroides - principalmente de 17 βestradiol (E2) e progesterona (P4) - que ocorrem antes e após ovulação (SEYTANOGLU et al., 2008).

O FO na espécie bovina é composto por diversos esteroides tais como: P4, 5αdihidroprogesterona, 20α-dihidroprogesterona, 3α5β-tetrahidroprogesterona, 3α5αtetrahidroprogesterona, 5α20α-tetrahidroprogesterona, 3β5α-tetrahidroprogesterona, 3α5α20α-hexahidroprogesterona, 3α5β20α-hexahidroprogesterona, 3β5α20αhexahidroprogesterona, pregnenolona, 20α-dihidropregnenolona, dehidroepiandrosterona, testosterona, androstenediona, E2, estrona, 17αhidroprogesterona, cortisol e cortisona. Dentre estes, E2 e P4 destacam-se como principais reguladores das alterações fisiológicas que ocorrem no oviduto durante o ciclo reprodutivo (LAMY et al., 2016a).

Estas alterações são referentes a mudanças na morfologia, atividade e expressão gênica das CEO (CERNY et al., 2015). O E2 estimula a ciliogênese das células ciliadas presentes no oviduto, além de estimular a atividade contrátil, ao potencializar a ação do receptor α -adrenérgico neste órgão. Enquanto que a P4 inibe a ciliogênese das células ciliadas, e estimula o relaxamento do oviduto, ao potencializar a ação do receptor β -adrenérgico (ABE; OIKAWA, 1993; revisado por HUNTER, 2012).

Além do efeito no oviduto, já foi relatado o efeito destes esteroides nos espermatozoides. Na espécie humana, suína e em ratos, a P4 tem ação no estímulo dos eventos da capacitação espermática e RA, quimiotaxia do espermatozoide em direção ao oócito, ligação e fusão do espermatozoide-zona pelúcida (ZP). Em espermatozoides humanos, foi demonstrado que o E2 estimula o efluxo de colesterol, a fosforilação da tirosina, o aumento da concentração intracelular de cálcio, induzindo consequentemente, a ocorrência da capacitação espermática. Outra ação do E2 está relacionada ao metabolismo espermático, ao aumentar a concentração intracelular espermática de trifosfato de adenosina (ATP), promover β-oxidação dos ácidos graxos e induzir atividade de lipase (revisado por LÓPEZ-TORRES; CHIRINOS, 2017).

Devido à importância destes esteroides na regulação e modulação do ambiente do oviduto, e até mesmo na função espermática, foi primordial a descoberta da concentração dos esteroides, em destaque E2 e P4, no ambiente do oviduto durante o ciclo estral. Na espécie bovina, Wijayagunawardane et al. (1998) determinaram a concentração de P4 e E2 no tecido do oviduto nos lados ipsilateral e contralateral ao corpo lúteo (CL) durante as fases: folicular, pós-ovulatória e luteal. Os resultados obtidos neste estudo, mostraram que as concentrações de E2 e P4 presentes no lado ipsilateral ao CL foram: fase luteal (P4: ~ 500 ng/mL; E2: ~ 250 pg/mL), fase folicular (P4: ~ 0 ng/mL; E2: ~ 875 pg/mL) e pós-ovulatória (P4: ~ 0 ng/mL; E2: ~ 250 pg/mL). Embora este estudo tenha sido importante na elucidação da variação nas concentrações de E2 e P4 no tecido do oviduto durante o ciclo estral em vacas, ainda era desconhecida a concentração de esteroides no ambiente *in vivo* que estão presente as CEO, gametas e embriões. Recentemente, Lamy et al. (2016a)

determinaram a concentração de diversos esteroides, incluindo E2 e P4, no FO bovino durante o ciclo estral. As concentrações de P4 e E2 no FO variam de acordo com o estágio do ciclo estral, porém apenas a concentração de P4 é afetada pelo lado da ovulação. O lado ipsilateral ao sítio da ovulação (fase pós-ovulatória), CL (fase luteal inicial e tardia) ou folículo pré-ovulatório (fase pré-ovulatória) apresentou maior concentração de P4 em comparação ao lado contralateral independente da fase do ciclo estral em que o FO foi obtido. Neste estudo, as concentrações de P4 no FO no lado ipsilateral encontrado na fase pré-ovulatória (fase folicular) foi ~ 6,3 ng/mL e nas fases pós-ovulatória, luteal inicial até intermediária e luteal tardia (fase luteal) variaram entre 56,9 – 120,3 ng/mL. Enquanto que as concentrações de E2 foram de ~ 290,5 pg/mL na fase folicular e variaram entre 44,0 – 118,3 pg/mL na fase luteal. Estes estudos indicam que não apenas as concentrações de E2 e P4 variam durante o ciclo estral, mais que ainda existe uma transferência destes esteroides do ovário para lúmen do oviduto, e até mesmo, uma síntese local desses esteroides no oviduto.

2.3 FLUIDO DO OVIDUTO

O oviduto fornece o ambiente adequado para o transporte, armazenamento e capacitação dos espermatozoides, além disso realiza a captação, transporte e maturação de oócitos, e em última análise, a clivagem embrionária precoce (revisado por HUNTER, 2002). O FO contém uma mistura complexa de moléculas orgânicas e inorgânicas. Atualmente, sabe-se que no FO existe uma variedade de substâncias consideradas agentes indutores de capacitação, incluindo: bicarbonato (revisado por RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2007), glicosaminoglicanos (BERGQVIST; RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2007), glicosaminoglicanos (BERGQVIST; RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2006), cálcio (revisado por VISCONTI et al., 2002) e noradrenalina (WAY; KILLIAN, 2002). Tem sido reportado, que o FO promove um ambiente ideal para manter a função espermática, até que o oócito alcance a região da ampola do oviduto após a ovulação.

Além disso, os componentes do fluido ao interagirem com o espermatozoide induzem mudanças intrínsecas na arquitetura de sua membrana plasmática (MP) estável, na concentração iônica intracelular, no metabolismo e motilidade espermática (COY et al., 2010; revisado por HUNTER; RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2004; revisado por RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2007). Em estudo de Imam et al. (2008), a adição de proteínas do FO na fase folicular durante o processo de criopreservação, promoveu

um efeito benéfico na viabilidade espermática e integridade acrossomal, sugerindo assim um efeito protetor no acrossoma contra danos oxidativo e proteolítico causado pela criopreservação. No entanto, o efeito do FO no espermatozoide depende da sua origem, ou seja, da região anatômica no qual foi obtido e do estágio do ciclo estral no qual foi produzido (BERGQVIST et al., 2006; KUMARESAN et al., 2012, 2014).

Sabe-se que as CEO secretam proteínas no FO, sendo que estas ligam-se a membrana espermática induzindo a capacitação e hiperativação espermática (YESTE et al., 2009). No entanto, o mecanismo pelo qual o FO modula a função espermática não é totalmente compreendido, além de existirem poucos estudos avaliando o efeito do uso do FO na capacitação *in vitro* em espermatozoides ovinos.

2.4 CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO

No mecanismo *in vivo*, antes da fertilização, a reserva espermática é formada no istmo onde o espermatozoide adere-se a CEO através da MP, e esta ligação ao epitélio do oviduto é importante para manutenção da viabilidade espermática (DOBRINSKI; SUAREZ; BALL, 1996). Diversos estudos foram realizados avaliando o efeito do cocultivo dos espermatozoides com CEO na função espermática em espécies distintas como a: ovina (GUTIÉRREZ et al., 1993), equina (DOBRINSKI; SUAREZ; BALL, 1996; ELLINGTON; BALL; YANG, 1993), bovina (POLLARD et al., 1991), humana (KERVANCIOGLU; DJAHANBAKHCH; AITKEN, 1994; MORALES et al., 1996; Zhu, 2001) e canina (KAWAKAMI et al., 2001). Estes estudos demonstram que o cocultivo de CEO com os espermatozoides modula a viabilidade e motilidade espermática. Contudo, existe divergência entre estes estudos no efeito do cocultivo com a CEO na indução da capacitação espermática/RA.

Alguns estudos afirmam que a interação das CEO mantém baixa concentração intracelular de cálcio no espermatozoide, promovendo assim um efeito preventivo na capacitação e exocitose acrossomal prematura, garantindo que os espermatozoides se mantenham viáveis até que ocorra o processo de fertilização (DOBRINSKI; SUAREZ; BALL, 1996; KAWAKAMI et al., 2001; MORALES et al., 1996). Resultado de outro estudo, indica que o cocultivo de espermatozoides com CEO aumenta a porcentagem de espermatozoides apresentando o padrão de capacitação espermática (ELLINGTON; BALL; YANG, 1993). Além disso, Pollard et al. (1991) demostraram a capacidade do cocultivo de espermatozoides com CEO em induzir o padrão de motilidade hiperativada, característica do estágio final da capacitação

espermática. Ainda Gutiérrez et al. (1993), evidenciaram que o contato entre espermatozoide e CEO é necessário para que ocorra o processo de capacitação, e subsequente RA.

Na espécie ovina, Gutiérrez et al. (1993) demonstraram que a incubação dos espermatozoides com monocamada de CEO, promove a manutenção da viabilidade espermática e induz a capacitação espermática/RA *in vitro*. Ainda, segundo Davachi et al. (2016) a célula epitelial da região da ampola pode servir como "células auxiliadoras" na MIV e induzir o endurecimento da ZP, resultando em uma redução drástica da poliespermia, enquanto que a taxa de penetração e fertilização normal aumentam significativamente. Dessa forma, é possível afirmar que na espécie ovina a interação da CEO com o gameta (espermatozoide e oócito) promove efeitos benéficos a estes, resultando em maior eficiência na FIV. Porém, ainda não foi possível determinar na espécie ovina quais as funções específicas são moduladas pela interação direta dos espermatozoides com a CEO. Apesar disso, Gutiérrez et al. (1993) sugerem que a função espermática (viabilidade e motilidade espermática) e o processo de capacitação/RA podem ser regulados de forma independente pelas CEO.

2.5 PRODUÇÃO IN VITRO DE EMBRIÕES

Os fatores críticos da produção *in vivo* de embriões em pequenos ruminantes são: (1) a grande variação da resposta da fêmea ao protocolo hormonal de superovulação; (2) a regressão precoce do CL em cabras e (3) o trauma cirúrgico devido a técnica de laparotomia, utilizada na recuperação de embriões em ovelhas. A PIVE é uma biotecnologia em que simula o processo desde da maturação oocitária até desenvolvimento embrionário ao estágio de blastocisto em ambiente *in vitro*. A PIVE é uma alternativa à produção *in vivo* de embriões, visto que dispensa o uso de protocolos hormonais para superovulação, a técnica de aspiração folicular para obtenção dos oócitos por laparoscopia (LOPU – *Laparoscopic ovum pick-up*) ser menos traumática do que a laparotomia, além disso, pelo fato dos oócitos utilizados nesta biotecnologia poderem ser obtidos de fêmeas inférteis ou subférteis, pré-púberes, prenhas, lactantes ou até mesmo com óbito recente (revisado por PARAMIO; IZQUIERDO, 2016). Esta técnica apresenta quatro etapas essenciais: coleta de oócitos, maturação *in vitro* (MIV), FIV e o desenvolvimento *in vitro* (DIV) resultando no estágio de blastocisto, no qual os embriões podem ser criopreservados ou transferidos

para o útero de fêmeas sincronizadas. Em pequenos ruminantes, os métodos utilizados para obtenção de oócitos são: (a) aspiração folicular, dissecção ou *slicing* dos ovários obtidos *post mortem*, (b) aspiração folicular por laparotomia abdominal – pouco utilizado atualmente – e (c) aspiração folicular por LOPU (revisado por SOUZA-FABJAN et al., 2014).

Durante o processo de MIV, o oócito deve sofrer de forma sincrônica a maturação nuclear e citoplasmática, sendo que os oócitos imaturos são maturados em meio TCM-199 (tissue culture medium 199) tamponado e suplementado com Lglutamina, piruvato, hormônios (hormônio folículo estimulante (FSH), hormônio luteinizante (LH) e E2) e soro fetal bovino (SFB). Além disso, estes são mantidos em incubação na temperatura de 38,5 °C em atmosfera umidificada de 5% de CO₂ em ar (revisado por FREITAS; MELO, 2010). A etapa de FIV depende tanto da qualidade dos oócitos quanto dos espermatozoides utilizados (revisado por HANSEN, 2006). Para que os espermatozoides sejam capazes de fecundar o oócito, é necessário a adição de indutores da capacitação ao meio. Este meio deve apresentar bicarbonato, cálcio, fonte de energia e albumina sérica como um composto de ligação do colesterol, sendo que na maioria das espécies de mamíferos, a capacitação in vitro ocorre em meio que se assemelha ao ambiente do oviduto (revisado por COY et al., 2012). Esta etapa culmina com a penetração do espermatozoide no oócito, extrusão do segundo corpúsculo polar e formação de um embrião diploide (revisado por LONERGAN; FAIR, 2016). Após a etapa de FIV, os presumíveis zigotos são retirados do meio de fertilização, e colocados no meio de cultivo embrionário, que permite que estes atinjam o estágio de blastocisto.

2.6 CAPACITAÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA, REAÇÃO ACROSSÔMICA E FECUNDAÇÃO

Após a ejaculação, os espermatozoides de mamíferos não são capazes de fecundar o oócito, mesmo apresentando motilidade e aparente normalidade morfológica. Esta capacidade é adquirida *in vivo* durante a passagem dos espermatozoides nos órgãos reprodutivos feminino, por meio do processo conhecido como capacitação (YANG; JIANG; FOOTE, 1993).

A capacitação espermática é o processo pelo qual alterações fisiológicas tornam o espermatozoide capaz de fertilizar o oócito, e este evento ocorre durante a

passagem nos órgãos reprodutivos feminino, principalmente no oviduto (AUSTIN, 1951; CHANG, 1951). Esta descoberta realizada em 1951 foi de extrema importância para permitir o desenvolvimento da técnica de FIV. A capacitação espermática é basicamente modulada por alterações nas concentrações de adenosina 3',5'-monofosfato cíclico (AMPc), pH intracelular, concentração intracelular de cálcio e no potencial de membrana (revisado por GERVASI; VISCONTI, 2016). Os aspectos moleculares da capacitação envolvem eventos moleculares complexos em cascata, e estes foram divididos em eventos de capacitação: rápido e lento.

A hiperativação da motilidade espermática é considerada um evento inicial. Durante o armazenamento dos espermatozoides na cauda do epidídimo, este encontra-se imóvel consumindo alta taxa de oxigênio. Ao ser liberado do epidídimo e entrar em contato com o plasma seminal, ocorre a ativação da motilidade espermática, considerado um evento rápido e inicial de capacitação espermática. Quando os espermatozoides entram em contato com o plasma seminal, encontram um ambiente rico em bicarbonato e cálcio, e estes íons entram no meio intracelular espermático por meio do mecanismo de cotransporte (Na⁺ / HCO₃⁻) e pelo canal de cálcio específico no espermatozoide (*Catsperm*). Estes íons, principalmente o bicarbonato, levam a ativação da adenil ciclase específica do espermatozoide (SACY – adenil ciclase insensível a proteína G), e assim ao aumento da concentração intracelular da AMPc. Este aumento do AMPc, resulta na ativação da fosforilação de várias proteínas alvos (incluindo substratos da proteína quinase A (PKA)). Como consequência, ocorre a ativação da motilidade espermática e início da sinalização de diversas vias (revisado por VISCONTI et al., 2009).

Eventos lentos requerem um período longo de incubação e após este período, os espermatozoides adquirem a capacidade fertilizante, pelo padrão de motilidade hiperativada (alterações moleculares na cauda) е da capacidade dos espermatozoides em sofrerem posteriormente o processo de RA (alterações moleculares na cabeça). Similar aos eventos rápidos, a ativação de SACY ocorre pelo aumento intracelular espermático de bicarbonato e cálcio por meio da abertura dos canais de cálcio. No entanto, diferente dos eventos rápidos, a fosforilação da tirosina depende da presença de aceptores de colesterol (albumina sérica bovina (BSA), βciclodextrina, lipoproteína de alta densidade (HDL)). Os aceptores de colesterol promovem o efluxo de colesterol, no qual leva a desestabilização da MP, por meio da alteração da fluidez da MP. Isto facilita o influxo de íons (bicarbonato, cálcio) e redistribuição das proteínas de membrana e anticorpos (revisado por VISCONTI et al., 2002).

Ainda não se sabe como ocorre a regulação através do efluxo de colesterol sob as vias intrínsecas da capacitação espermática. Hipotetiza-se que a MP dos espermatozoides não capacitados, possui uma região específica que concentra colesterol em microdomínios lipídicos (*rafts* lipídicos), que permite a ligação de um complexo de proteínas. O comportamento destes *rafts* lipídicos sofre efeitos profundos devido ao efluxo de colesterol (revisado por SALICIONI et al., 2007). Além disso, tem sido relatado o importante papel das proteínas do plasma seminal bovino na modificação da membrana lipídica do espermatozoide durante o evento de capacitação. Thérien et al. (1998) relataram a capacidade dessas proteínas de estimular o efluxo de colesterol de uma maneira tempo e dose dependente. Ainda, o mecanismo pelo qual ocorre o processo de efluxo de colesterol causado por essas proteínas tem semelhança com o modelo de difusão passiva e envolve sítios de ligação colina específicos (MOREAU et al., 2000).

A ativação da SACY leva ao aumento do AMPc que tem como ação principal a ativação da PKA. A ativação da PKA promove a fosforilação de diversas proteínas alvos que iniciam a ativação de diversas vias de sinalização em uma reação em cascata. Um dos principais papéis da PKA é a fosforilação da proteína tirosina. Como a PKA é uma serina/treonina quinase e não uma tirosina quinase, a PKA não consegue fosforilar proteínas com resíduos de tirosina, sendo assim, possivelmente existe o envolvimento de uma proteína tirosina quinase intermediária (revisado por SALICIONI et al., 2007; revisado por VISCONTI et al., 2002). As hipóteses referentes a regulação da fosforilação da proteína tirosina pela PKA são: (1) a PKA ou uma cascata enzimática proveniente da fosforilação da PKA induzem a ativação da proteína tirosina quinase; (2) a PKA ou uma cascata enzimática proveniente da fosforilação da PKA induzem a inibição da fosfotirosina fosfatase; (3) PKA promove a fosforilação de proteínas alvos resultando em resíduos de serina ou treonina que se tornam substratos para proteína tirosina (revisado por VISCONTI et al., 2002).

A fertilização ocorre na ampola do oviduto e envolve três etapas: (1) ligação do espermatozoide na ZP por receptores espécie-específico; (2) após a ligação na ZP, o espermatozoide sofre o processo de RA; (3) e finamente fusiona-se ao oócito

(revisado por WASSARMAN, 1999). Após o espermatozoide encontrar oócito, proteínas presentes em sua MP, conhecidas como 'egg binding proteins (EBPs) interagem com receptores específicos presentes na ZP (glicoproteínas). Alguns receptores/proteínas estão envolvidos no processo de reconhecimento e ou fusão. Dentre estes, destaca-se a descoberta do receptor Juno presente no oócito que interage e reconhece uma proteína essencial para ligação e fusão espermatozoide-oócito conhecida como Izumo, presente na superfície de membrana do espermatozoide (BIANCHI et al., 2014). A ZP possui quatro glicoproteínas (ZP1-4; no qual a ZP4 é considerada um pseudogene parálogo a ZP1), sendo a ZP3 o principal receptor do espermatozoide. Um papel importante da ZP3 é sua participação na especificidade entre espermatozoide e ZP por meio da codificação da informação que determina resíduos de aminoácidos específicos para glicosilação (revisado por GUPTA et al., 2012; revisado por WASSARMAN; JOVINE; LITSHER, 2001).

Após a ligação entre espermatozoide-ZP, o espermatozoide deve sofrer exocitose acrossomal, processo conhecido como RA. Neste processo ocorre a fusão em diversos pontos na membrana celular interna com a membrana externa do acrossoma, o que resulta na liberação do conteúdo presente nesta organela (enzimas hidrolíticas) do espermatozoide capacitado. A interação entre espermatozoide e mZP3 pode ser necessária para indução da RA mediada pelo recrutamento de receptores de proteína G. Além disso, as células do *cumulus* são capazes de sintetizar P4 em alta concentração no microambiente do *cumulus*, sendo a P4 considerada um potente indutor da RA (CHEN; KUI; CHAN, 2013).

A cascata de sinalização transducional intracelular inclui diversos componentes tais como: proteína G, íon cálcio, canal voltagem sensível de cálcio, fosfolipase C (*PLC*), inositol-3,4,5-trifosfato (IP3), receptores de IP3, diacilglicerol (DAG), adenilato ciclase (AC) e AMPc. Como resultado final, ocorre a ativação de proteínas quinases tal como PKA e proteína quinase C (PKC), e o aumento da fosforilação de proteínas. O aumento do cálcio intracelular, pH, fosfolipases (A2 e D) e fosforilação de proteínas resultam na RA (BALDI et al., 2000).

Tem sido descrito que mecanismos de fusão da membrana celular em células somáticas tal como: SNAREs (*soluble NSF attachment receptor*) e Rab3A GTPase em neurônio e células endócrinas, podem participar da regulação do processo de fusão, que ocorre durante a RA nos espermatozoides (TSAI et al., 2007; IIDA et al.,

1999). Após a RA, o espermatozoide deve penetrar na ZP e se fusionar ao oócito. Acredita-se que determinada população de proteínas e sítios de organização lipídica, garantem a especificidade do local de fusão tanto no espermatozoide (região equatorial – região pós acrossomal), quanto no oócito (região rica em microvilos) (revisado por STEIN, 2004).

Os aspectos moleculares da interação dos gametas não são totalmente elucidados, porém foram identificadas algumas proteínas que parecem ser essenciais para o processo de fusão entre os gametas. A família ADAM de proteínas transmembranas do espermatozoide (ADAM 1 ou fertilina- α , ADAM 2 ou fertilina- β e ADAM 3 ou ciritestina) tem papel importante na ligação com oócito. Estas proteínas ligam-se com receptores de integrinas do oócito, e como resultado desta ligação, tem sido demonstrado que enquanto a fertilina- β está envolvida na ligação do espermatozoide com a membrana do oócito, a fertilina- α tem papel em fases subsequentes tal como fusão e etapas posteriores da fertilização (revisado por GEORGADAKI et al., 2016; revisado por WASSARMAN; JOVINE; LITSHER, 2001).

A CD9 é uma proteína que faz parte da família tetraspanina ubíqua. A família tetraspanina forma um complexo multi-molecular com outras moléculas (integrina, imunoglobulinas e proteoglicanos) e participa de funções distintas: adesão, proliferação e diferenciação celular (revisado por KAJI; KUDO, 2004). Chen et al. (1999) mostraram que a adição do anticorpo contra CD9 leva a inibição dos processos de ligação e fusão do espermatozoide-oócito, indicando que esta proteína presente na membrana do oócito tem papel importante na regulação destes processos. Mesmo após esta descoberta, ainda não se sabia os fatores relacionados ao espermatozoide considerados primordiais para o processo de fusão. Inoue et al. (2005) descreveram a primeira proteína específica do espermatozoide essencial para a fusão conhecida como "Izumo". Esta proteína atua por meio da organização e estabilização do complexo de proteína-like, sendo este fundamental para fusão da membrana (revisado por GEORGADAKI et al., 2016). Os espermatozoides também transportam para oócito a fosfolipase c zeta (PLCζ) específica dos espermatozoides que é responsável pelas oscilações na concentração de cálcio no oócito, е consequentemente, promovem a retomada da meiose e ativação do desenvolvimento embrionário (SAUNDERS; SWANN; LAI, 2007).

2.7 INDUTORES DA CAPACITAÇÃO IN VITRO

No mecanismo *in vitro*, faz-se necessário a adição de agentes capacitantes a fim de promover a alteração na membrana dos espermatozoides, induzindo-o ao processo de capacitação (YANG; JIANG; FOOTE, 1993). Diversos aditivos, tanto sintético como de origem animal, têm sido utilizados com sucesso para induzir a capacitação *in vitro* em espermatozoides mamíferos (GARCÍA-ÁLVAREZ et al., 2015). Dentre estes, destacam-se: heparina, hipotaurina, BSA e óxido nítrico (ON).

Um dos glicosaminoglicanos presente no FO mais utilizado como indutor da capacitação espermática é a heparina. De acordo com Cormier e Bailey (2003), a heparina tem como função estimular o aumento da (o): concentração de cálcio intracelular, pH intracelular e concentração de AMPc, que parecem ser necessárias para iniciar a capacitação, além de remover as proteínas do plasma seminal adsorvidas à superfície da MP, as quais são consideradas inibidoras da capacitação. A hipotaurina é um precursor da taurina, que em combinação com a heparina mantém a motilidade e viabilidade espermática (LUKOSEVICIUTE; ZILINSKAS; JANUSKAUSKAS, 2005), além de agir como um captador de radicais de oxigênio (WAKAYAMA et al., 1996).

Outro importante indutor da capacitação espermática é a BSA, que é capaz de modular o processo de capacitação por meio de sua capacidade de remover o colesterol (revisado por VISCONTI; KOPF, 1998) e promover o influxo de cálcio no espermatozoide (XIA; REN, 2009).

O ON é um radical livre de meia vida curta, originado a partir da L-arginina, em uma reação catalisada pela enzima óxido nítrico sintase (NOS). Ferreira-Berbari et al. (2010) demonstraram, pela primeira vez em bovinos, que o ON induz a capacitação *in vitro* de espermatozoides criopreservados. A importância do ON na capacitação espermática está relacionada com a fosforilação de duas proteínas espermáticas (p105 e p81 que apresentam massa molecular de 105 kDa e 81 kDa, respectivamente).

3 HIPÓTESES CIENTÍFICAS

• CAPÍTULO II

O efeito do fluido do oviduto bovino na função e capacitação espermática de espermatozoides ovinos varia de acordo com fase do ciclo estral em que o fluido foi obtido.

CAPÍTULO III

Variações nas concentrações de E2 e P4 de acordo com a fase do ciclo estral alteram o perfil de resposta das células epiteliais do oviduto bovino na modulação da função e capacitação espermática de espermatozoides ovinos.

4 OBJETIVOS

4.1 OBJETIVO GERAL

Avaliar o efeito do FO e das CEO bovino na fase folicular e luteal na modulação *in vitro* da função e capacitação de espermatozoides ovinos durante um período análogo ao período em que o espermatozoide permanece no oviduto.

4.2 OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS

- Estudar a cinética dos espermatozoides ovinos expostos ao FO na fase folicular (proestro ou estro) e fase luteal (metaestro ou diestro) por meio dos parâmetros relacionados a velocidade;
- (2) Avaliar o efeito do FO na fase folicular (proestro ou estro) e fase luteal (metaestro ou diestro) na integridade da MP de espermatozoides ovinos;
- (3) Avaliar o efeito do FO na fase folicular (proestro ou estro) e fase luteal (metaestro ou diestro) na indução da capacitação de espermatozoides ovinos;
- (4) Avaliar o efeito da interação entre espermatozoide ovino e CEO de vaca que foram incubados com concentrações de E2 e P4 similar a fase folicular e fase luteal na integridade da MP de espermatozoides ovinos;
- (5) Estudar o efeito da interação entre espermatozoide ovino e CEO de vaca que foram incubados com concentrações de E2 e P4 similar a fase folicular e fase luteal na cinética por meio dos parâmetros relacionados a velocidade;
- (6) Avaliar o efeito da interação entre espermatozoide ovino e CEO de vaca que foram incubados com concentrações de E2 e P4 similar a fase folicular e fase luteal na indução da capacitação de espermatozoides ovinos;
5 MATERIAIS E MÉTODOS

O Comitê de Ética no Uso de Animais (CEUA) da Universidade Federal Fluminense aprovou esta pesquisa (protocolo de aprovação: 879/2016; ANEXO). Além disso, esta dissertação seguiu as diretrizes do *Animal Research: Reporting of In vivo Experiments* (ARRIVE).

5.1 REAGENTES

Todos os reagentes utilizados foram comprados da Sigma Chemical Co. (St. Louis, MO, EUA). Exceto os seguintes reagentes: *Dulbecco's Phosphate Buffered Saline (DPBS)* obtido pela Nutricell (Campinas, Brasil), álcool 70% pela Jand Química (São Paulo, Brasil), SFB pela *ThermoFisher Scientific* (Waltham, MA, EUA) e o diluidor comercial *OptiXcell*[™] obtido pela IMV Technologies (L'Aigle, França).

5.2 CLASSIFICAÇÃO DO OVIDUTO

Os órgãos genitais de vacas foram obtidos em matadouro e transportados até o laboratório em gelo em até 1 h após coleta. No laboratório, os ovidutos foram classificados baseado na morfologia ovariana de ambos ovários da mesma fêmea. O ovidutos foram classificados em fase folicular ou luteal, de acordo com critérios definidos por Ireland, Murphee e Coulson (1980), considerando estágios I, II e III como fase luteal e estágio IV como fase folicular (Quadro 1). Órgãos reprodutivos apresentando patologias tais como ovários policístico e hidrometra ou obtidos de fêmeas prenhas foram descartados. Ambos ovidutos do mesmo animal, classificados em fase folicular ou luteal foram utilizados. Após classificação, os ovidutos foram separados e rapidamente lavados uma vez em álcool 70 % e duas vezes em *DPBS*. Em seguida, os ovidutos foram transferidos para placa de Petri no gelo e dissecados.

Estágios do Ciclo Estral Ш IV Características L Ш Coberto por Vermelho, recentemente ponto de Aparência ovulado, ponto ruptura; ápice Bronzeado ou Amarelo ao externa do CL de ruptura não do CL laranja esbranquiçado recoberto por vermelho ou epitélio marrom Vermelho, Laranja e ocasionalmente apenas o preenchido ápice Aparência Laranja com sangue, apresenta Laranja interna do CL amarelo células coloração vagamente vermelha ou marrom organizadas Diâmetro do 0,5 - 1,0 cm 1,6 - 2,0 cm 1,6 - 2,0 cm< 1,0 cm CL Similar ao descrito no Vascularização Geralmente estágio II, Não visível na superfície Não visível limitado a porém irá do CL periferia cobrir o ápice do CL neste estágio Folículos apresentando Presentes ou Presentes Presentes Ausentes diâmetro > 10 ausentes mm Período de dias estimado 1-4 5-10 11-17 18-20 referente ao ciclo estral * Concentração plasmática de 1,5 ± 0,2 ** $6,9 \pm 0,5$ ** 7,8 ± 0,4 ** 1,2 ± 0,2 ** progestágenos (ng/mL)

Quadro 1. Classificação da morfologia ovariana durante o ciclo estral de vacas utilizada no Experimento 1 (Adaptado de Ireland; Murphee; Coulson 1980).

^{*} Dia da ovulação = Dia 1; Dia do estro = Dia 20

** Resultados apresentados em média ± desvio padrão

5.3 OBTENÇÃO DO FLUIDO DO OVIDUTO (FO) DE VACA

Após a dissecção, 1 mL da solução tampão fosfato-salino (*PBS*) foi introduzida na ponta da ampola para lavagem do lúmen, e aplicou-se uma pressão manual ascendente da região da ampola no sentido da região do istmo, para recuperação do fluido como descrito anteriormente pelo nosso grupo (BATISTA et al., 2016). Este procedimento foi repetido em 20 ovidutos e o líquido recuperado no primeiro oviduto foi reutilizado na lavagem do próximo oviduto, de acordo com a classificação do seu grupo experimental. O fluido foi centrifugado a 6000 × *g* por 5 min a 4 °C para remoção dos detritos celulares. Em seguida, o sobrenadante foi imediatamente armazenado a -20 °C até o momento do uso.

5.4 OBTENÇÃO E CULTIVO DAS CÉLULAS EPITELIAIS DO OVIDUTO (CEO) DE VACA

As CEO foram obtidas por meio de uma raspagem mecânica do oviduto utilizando uma lâmina de vidro. Em seguida, as CEO foram depositadas em um tubo cônico contendo 5 mL de meio de lavagem (TCM-199 Hepes suplementado com 0,2 % de BSA fração V e 10 mg/mL de gentamicina), e este tubo foi colocado em uma estufa a 38,5 °C sob 5 % CO₂ por 5 min, para que ocorra o processo de sedimentação passiva. Após o processo de sedimentação, o sobrenadante foi descartado e em seguida foi adicionado 5 mL de meio de lavagem, sendo então realizado novamente o procedimento de sedimentação passiva em estufa a 38,5 °C sob 5 % CO₂. Este procedimento foi repetido três vezes. As CEO sedimentadas foram diluídas (fator de diluição: 1:100) em meio de cultivo (TCM-199 suplementado com 10 % de SFB e 10 mg/mL de gentamicina). Em seguida, 5 mL das CEO diluídas em meio de cultivo foram depositadas em garrafa de cultura celular (25 cm²) e cultivada durante 5-7 dias em estufa a 38,5 °C sob 5 % CO₂ e 20 % O₂. O meio foi completamente (5 mL) renovado após 48 h e posteriormente a este período, a cada 48 h metade do meio (2,5 mL) foi removido e substituído. O crescimento das monocamadas das CEO foi observado diariamente em microscópio invertido (Olympus® IX70, Tóquio, Japão) até atingirem a confluência (5-7 dias). As células em confluência foram tripsinizadas e congeladas. Em cada repetição, as células foram descongeladas e cultivadas até atingirem a confluência. Quando as CEO atingiram a confluência foram então utilizadas para o cocultivo com espermatozoide.

5.5 COLETA E PROCESSAMENTO DE SÊMEN

Antes dos experimentos serem executados, o processo de exaustão das reservas extra-gonadais foi realizado por meio de coleta diária de sêmen dos carneiros por quatro dias consecutivos, seguido de dois dias de descanso sexual (KAYA; AKSOY; TEKELI, 2002). Nos dois experimentos, sêmen fresco de três carneiros adultos com fertilidade comprovada foi coletado utilizando uma vagina artificial. Foi formado um *pool* dos três ejaculados com objetivo de eliminar o fator individual como uma variável da análise (BUCAK; TECKIN, 2007). No Experimento 1, utilizou-se sêmen a fresco, enquanto no Experimento 2, foi utilizado sêmen resfriado. No Experimento 1, após ser formado o *pool* dos ejaculados, 1 mL do ejaculado foi diluído em 10 mL do meio Fert-TALP sem indutores da capacitação (Fert-TALP modificado) e lavado por centrifugação (800 × g, 10 min) para remoção do plasma seminal como descrito por Mata-Campuzano et al. (2015). Esta etapa não foi realizada no Experimento 2, pelo fato das proteínas presentes no plasma seminal terem efeito protetor contra as crioinjúrias que ocorrem durante o processo de resfriamento (LEAHY; DE GRAFF, 2012).

5.6 RESFRIAMENTO DO SÊMEN

No Experimento 2, após ser formado o *pool* dos ejaculados foram retiradas alíquotas para análise da motilidade e a concentração espermática. Em seguida, o *pool* dos ejaculados foi diluído utilizando o diluidor comercial (OptiXcell™ - IVM Technologies) em uma concentração final de 600 x 10⁶ espermatozoides/mL (DA SILVA et al., 2014). O sêmen diluído foi envasado em palhetas de 0,25 mL e selado. Em seguida, as palhetas foram progressivamente resfriadas até 5 °C em um sistema automatizado (TK-3000[®], TK Tecnologia em congelação Ltda., Uberaba, MG), por um período em torno de 1,5 h e uma taxa de resfriamento de 0,25 °C/min. Após atingir a temperatura de 5 °C, as paletas foram rapidamente retiradas do sistema automatizado e colocadas em um sistema de transporte refrigerado Botutainer[®] (Botupharma Biotecnologia Animal, Botucatu, SP), previamente estabilizado na temperatura de 5 °C, e transportado em tempo máximo de 2 h até o laboratório para ser realizado o experimento. Ao chegar no laboratório, as paletas foram reaquecidas a 37 °C e em seguida, o sêmen foi submetido a um processo de centrifugação (600 × *g* por 7 min

na temperatura ambiente, 20-23 °C) com objetivo de remover o diluidor (MAKAREVICH et al., 2014).

5.7 SELEÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA

A seleção espermática foi realizada pela técnica de *swim-up*. O procedimento foi similar ao descrito por Olivares et al. (2017) com algumas modificações: 300 µL (Experimento 1) ou 200 µL (Experimento 2) do sêmen foi colocado em um tubo de 15 mL e em seguida foi depositado 3 mL (Experimento 1) ou 1 mL (Experimento 2) de meio Fert-TALP modificado sob o sêmen. O tubo foi mantido em uma angulação de 45º e incubado por 45 min a 38 °C sob 5% CO₂. Após a incubação, o sobrenadante contendo os espermatozoides selecionados foi centrifugado (300 × *g*, 8 min). A concentração espermática do *pellet* formado após este procedimento foi determinada utilizando a câmara de *Neubauer* após a diluição (1:400).

5.8 ANÁLISE DA CINÉTICA ESPERMÁTICA

A cinética espermática foi analisada utilizando o sistema de análise espermática assistida por computador (CASA – Computer Assisted Sperm Analyses) pelo sistema SCA® (Sperm Class Analyser, Microptics S.L., Version 3.2.0, Barcelona, Espanha), utilizando o microscópio de contraste de fase e epifluorescência (Nikon TM H5505, Eclipse 50i, Japão). A análise foi feita em microscopia de contraste de fase em aumento de 100 X. Alíquota de 10 µL da amostra foi colocada em lâmina préaquecida (37 °C) e coberta por uma lamínula de 24 x 24 mm. Em cada análise, foram avaliados 10 campos para incluir pelo menos 200 espermatozoides. A configuração do software foi ajustada para espermatozoides de carneiro. A configuração padrão dos parâmetros foram as seguintes: as dimensões da cabeça espermática detectável pelo sistema entre 18 e 60 µm². Espermatozoides foram identificados como imóveis apresentando velocidade curvilínea (VCL) abaixo de 10 µm/s; entre 10 e 45 µm/s foram classificados como lento, entre 45 e 75 µm/s foram classificados como médio; e acima de 75 µm/s foram classificados como rápido. Espermatozoides apresentando retilinearidade (STR) acima de 80% foram considerados progressivos. As variáveis analisadas foram: motilidade total (%), motilidade progressiva (%), progressiva rápida (%), velocidade rápida (%), velocidade média (%), velocidade lenta (%), velocidade média da trajetória (*VAP*; μ m/s), *VCL* (μ m/s), velocidade linear progressiva (*VSL*; μ m/s), *STR* (*STR*: *VSL*/*VAP*; %), linearidade (*LIN*: *VSL*/*VCL*; %), taxa de oscilação (*WOB*: *VAP*/*VCL*; %), amplitude de deslocamento lateral da cabeça (*ALH*; μ m) e frequência de batimento flagelar cruzado (*BCF*; Hz).

5.9 INTEGRIDADE DA MEMBRANA PLASMÁTICA

Esta avaliação foi realizada de acordo com descrito por Yániz et al. (2013) com pequenas modificações. Foi utilizado a associação de duas sondas fluorescentes: laranja de acridina [10.000x] e iodeto de propídeo (0,5 mg/mL). O iodeto de propídeo é uma sonda não permeável à MP que se liga ao ácido nucleico emitindo uma fluorescência vermelha. A laranja de acridina é uma sonda permeável à MP e seletiva ao ácido nucleico que emite uma fluorescência verde. A análise foi realizada no sistema *CASA* conectado a um microscópio sob iluminação de epifluorescência equipada com conjunto de filtro apropriado (465-495 nm excitação e 515-555 nm emissão), utilizando um aumento de 100 X. Pelo menos 300 espermatozoides por lâmina foram analisados.

5.10 TAXA DE CAPACITAÇÃO ESPERMÁTICA

A avaliação do *status* da capacitação espermática foi realizada por meio do método de clortetraciclina, conforme estabelecido por Pérez et al. (1996) modificado por Olivares et al. (2017). A solução de 0,75 mM CTC foi preparada diariamente em uma solução tampão apresentando 20 mM de Tris, 130 mM de NaCl e 5 mM de Lcisteína. Alíquota da amostra (10 µL) foi misturada com 10 µL da solução de 0,75 mM CTC em uma lâmina. No Experimento 2, foi adicionado 1 µL de 4 % paraformolaldeído para que fosse possível realizar a análise no dia seguinte. Uma gota de 0,22 M de 1,4 diazabiciclo [2.2.2.] octane (DABCO) foi adicionado a lâmina para preservar a fluorescência celular e facilitar a leitura. Após a homogeneização, a lâmina foi recoberta por uma lamínula de 24 x 24 mm e o padrão do CTC foi avaliado em microscopia de epifluorescência (Nikon TM H5505, Eclipse 50i, Japão), em aumento de 1000 X com óleo de imersão. As células foram observadas usando filtro *blue-violet* 2A (BV-2A) com emissão na faixa de 400-440 nm e excitação de fluorescência 470 nm. Foram classificados 200 espermatozoides de acordo com critérios previamente definidos (CORMIER; SIRARD; BAILEY, 1997). Os espermatozoides foram classificados da seguinte forma: fluorescência uniforme e brilhante ao longo de toda cabeça (células não-capacitadas – padrão F), banda livre de fluorescência na região pós-acrossomal (células capacitadas – padrão B) e ausência de fluorescência ao longo de toda cabeça exceto por uma faixa de fluorescência fina e brilhante na região equatorial (reação acrossômica – padrão AR) (FRASER; ABEYDEERA; NIWA, 1995).

5.11 ANÁLISE ESTATÍSTICA

As análises estatísticas foram realizadas utilizando os *softwares* estatísticos: *Prism* 5.01 (*GraphPad software, San Diego*, CA, USA) e sistemas para análises estatísticas (SAEG; SAEG 9.0, Universidade Federal de Viçosa, Minas Gerais, Brasil). Valores de média e erro padrão da média (EPM) foram calculados para as características espermáticas nos diferentes intervalos de tempo durante a incubação. As variáveis quantitativas foram submetidas aos testes de normalidade (teste de *Lilliefors*) e homocedasticidade (teste de *Bartlett*). Quando necessário, os dados foram submetidos a transformação logarítmica ou angular (arco seno; parâmetros com valores apresentados em porcentagem) antes de serem submetidos a Análise de variância com dois fatores (*Two-way* ANOVA) para medidas repetidas (modelo misto). O modelo estatístico utilizado inclui os efeitos do tratamento, tempo e a interação desses fatores nos parâmetros espermáticos analisados. Quando ANOVA revelou um efeito significativo, valores foram comparados pelo teste de Bonferroni. Diferenças foram consideradas significativamente diferentes quando o valor de *P* foi <0,05.

6 CAPÍTULO II

The phases of the estrous cycle do not influence the positive effect of heterologous oviductal fluid on ovine sperm kinematics or the acrosome reaction process

A fase do ciclo estral não influencia o efeito positivo do fluido do oviduto heterólogo na cinemática e reação acrossômica do espermatozoide ovino

Artigo submetido ao periódico: Reproduction in Domestic Animals
 Em: 20 de março de 2018
 Qualis: A2 – Medicina Veterinária

The phases of the estrous cycle do not influence the positive effect of heterologous oviductal fluid on ovine sperm kinematics or the acrosome reaction process

VAP Alfradique^{*} | JMG Souza-Fabjan^{*} | RITP Batista | LR Côrtes | GM Bragança | CV de Souza | FZ Brandão

Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, RJ, Brazil.

Correspondence

Vivian A.P. Alfradique, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, RJ, Brazil. Email: vivianangelico@gmail.com.

Joanna M.G. Souza-Fabjan, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, RJ, Brazil. Email: joannavet@gmail.com; jsouza-fabjan@id.uff.br.

Funding Information

Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro; Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos.

6.1 CONTENTS

During the estrous cycle, the oviduct undergoes functional and morphological modifications caused by fluctuations in hormonal levels. The present study aimed to evaluate the effect of bovine oviductal fluid (bOF) at the follicular phase and the luteal phase on ram sperm kinematics, capacitation status and plasma membrane (PM) integrity during 24 h of incubation. Fresh ram spermatozoa were selected using the swim-up technique and then incubated separately with either: bOF at the follicular phase (FbOF), bOF at the luteal phase (LbOF), Fert-TALP medium (positive control -POSControl) or Fert-TALP medium without any capacitating agent (negative control -NEGControl) for 24 h at 38 °C under 5% CO₂. Sperm kinematics, sperm capacitation status and integrity of sperm PM were evaluated at different intervals. The findings reveal that incubation for 2 h and 4 h with FbOF or LbOF promoted an increase (P < 0.05) in most of the sperm motility parameters as compared with the NEGControl group, and the parameters identified were similar (P > 0.05) to those of the POSControl group. At 6 h, the positive effect of FbOF or LbOF on ram sperm kinematics was no longer observed (P > 0.05). Integrity of sperm PM was not affected (P > 0.05) by incubation with FbOF or LbOF. Although FbOF or LbOF had no positive effect on capacitated rate, acrosome-reacted rates were greater (P < 0.05) during long incubation periods (18-24 h) when compared with the NEGControl group. It may be concluded that bOF increases ram sperm kinematics for up to 4 h regardless of the phase of the estrous cycle and causes a high acrosome-reacted rate after long incubation periods without affecting sperm viability.

Keywords: CASA system; Bovine oviductal fluid; Ram semen; Sperm capacitation; Sperm motility.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Oviductal secretion is a complex fluid formed by components secreted from epithelial cells and from blood plasma. Oviductal secretion contains many metabolic components, including glucose, lactate, pyruvate and amino acids, whose respective concentrations often differ from those of the uterine fluid and plasma (Hugentobler et al., 2010; Leese et al., 2008). In addition, the presence of growth factors, hormones, proteases, antioxidant protective agents, glycosidases and glycosyltransferases have also been reported in the oviduct. Some evidence suggests that these components influence or may contribute to the optimal development of the different processes that occur in the oviduct, including final maturation of female and male gametes and fertilization (Avilés, Coy, & Rizos, 2015).

Upon their deposit into the female reproductive tract, spermatozoa must overcome several barriers to reach the oviduct. Once in the isthmus, spermatozoa bind to the oviduct epithelium and establish a sperm reservoir where they are retained for 18 h or more (Hunter, 1985). During this interaction, the sperm remains in contact with the components present in the oviductal fluid (OF) that are capable of modulating sperm function and the sperm capacitation process (Coy et al., 2012). Previous research has confirmed that OF composition varies during the estrous cycle due to the accompanying variations in the concentration of steroid hormones (Hunter, 2012). This indicates that the effect of OF on sperm function and the sperm capacitation process could differ during the estrous cycle.

Several studies have evaluated the effect of homologous OF on boar and bull sperm function and the sperm capacitation process (Coy et al., 2010; Grippo, Way, & Kilian, 1995; Kumaresan et al., 2014). However, as yet, no study has examined how sperm function can be modulated by interactions between heterologous OF at different phases of the estrous cycle and spermatozoa. Heterologous OF produces a similar effect on enzymatic ZP hardening to homologous OF (Mondéjar, Avilés, & Coy, 2013), indicating that the effect of on oocytes is not species-specific. Considering that sperm capacitation can occur in a heterologous female tract (Saling & Bedford, 1981), heterologous oviductal secretions might modulate sperm function, thus producing a similar effect to homologous OF. Therefore, the heterologous system may be considered a suitable model to investigate the effect of OF on sperm physiology when homologous OF cannot be routinely collected due to the lower number of available animal samples (wild species and endangered species) and/or inaccessibility to a slaughterhouse. Given the indications that variations in steroid hormone concentrations during the estrous cycle alter the components of oviductal secretion, we hypothesized that the effect of bOF on ram sperm function and the sperm capacitation process might differ according to the phase of the estrous cycle during which the OF was obtained. Therefore, the present study evaluated the effect of bOF

in the follicular phase and the luteal phase on ram *in vitro* capacitation, sperm kinematics and PM integrity over a long incubation period (18-24 h).

6.3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

6.3.1 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

After sperm selection (swim-up), sperm were incubated in different media: (1) Positive control (POSControl): Fert-TALP medium; (2) Negative control (NEGControl): Fert-TALP medium without capacitating agents (caffeine, heparine, penicillamine, hypotaurine and epinephrine); (3) bOF at the follicular phase (FbOF): NEGControl medium supplemented with 10% FbOF; and (4) bOF at the luteal phase (LbOF): NEGControl medium supplemented with 10% LbOF. Sperm were incubated at 38 °C in 5% CO₂ for 24 h. The parameters of sperm kinematics, sperm PM integrity and sperm capacitation status were evaluated after 0 h, 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h. Five replicates were performed.

6.3.2 ETHICS

The Animal Care Committee of Universidade Federal Fluminense approved this research (protocol approval: 879/2016). Moreover, this manuscript followed the Animal Research: Reporting of *In vivo* Experiments (ARRIVE) guidelines.

6.3.3 REAGENTS

All chemicals were purchased from Sigma Chemical Co. (St. Louis, MO, USA) excluding Dulbecco's Phosphate Buffered Saline (DPBS), which was obtained from Nutricell (Campinas, Brazil), and the 70% ethanol solution, which was obtained from Jand Química (São Paulo, Brazil).

6.3.4 OVIDUCT CLASSIFICATION AND BOF COLLECTION

Genital tracts from cows were obtained at a local slaughterhouse and transported to the laboratory on ice within 1 h after collection. Once in the laboratory, the oviducts (n = 40) were classified based on the ovarian morphology of both ovaries

from the same female. Reproductive tracts presenting pathologies such as polycystic ovaries and hydrometra were discarded. Oviducts were classified as belonging to the follicular phase or the luteal phase according to Ireland, Murphee, & Coulson, (1980). Specifically, stages I, II and III are considered as the luteal phase and stage IV as the follicular phase. The stages were delineated as follows: stage I (days 1-4; post-ovulatory) – corpus luteum (CL) recently ovulated (red) with 0.5-1.5 cm diameter and absence of follicles with diameter > 10 mm; stage II (days 5-10; early-to-mid luteal phase) – point of rupture completely covered, presence of new CL with 1.6-2 cm diameter and peripheral vasculature, the CL apex is red/brown and presence of follicles with diameter > 10 mm; stage III (days 11-17; late luteal phase) – CL with 1.6-2 cm diameter and orange external/internal coloration, presence or not of follicles with a diameter > 10 mm; and stage IV (days 18-20; pre-ovulatory) – presence of at least one large follicle (diameter > 10 mm) and regressed CL with no surface vasculature.

After classification, the oviducts were separated from the tracts and quickly washed once with a 70% ethanol solution and twice with DPBS. Then, the oviducts were transferred on ice to Petri dishes and dissected. After dissection, 1000 μ L of PBS was introduced into the ampulla tip to wash the lumen and make a manual ascendant pressure from the ampulla to the isthmus, and the liquid was recovered as previously described by our group (Batista et al., 2016). This procedure was repeated for 20 oviducts and the liquid recovered in the first oviduct was reused to wash the next one according to their classification in the experimental group. The fluid was centrifuged at 6000 × *g* for 5 min at 4 °C to remove cellular debris. Thereafter, the supernatant was immediately stored at -20 °C until use.

6.3.5 SEMEN COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Prior to the experiment, exhaustion of extra-gonadal reserve was performed through daily semen collection for four consecutive days followed by two days of sexual rest (Kaya, Aksoy, & Tekeli, 2002). In each replicate, fresh semen from three adult rams with proven fertility was collected using an artificial vagina. Semen was pooled with the objective of eliminating the individual factor as a variable of the analysis (Bucak & Tekin, 2007). Then, 1 mL of semen was diluted into 10 mL Fert-TALP medium without capacitating agents (caffeine, heparine, penicillamine, hypotaurine and epinephrine), and centrifuged ($800 \times g$, 10 min) to remove seminal plasma (Mata-

Campuzano et al., 2015). This was done to eliminate the potential positive or negative impact of the components of seminal plasma on sperm function (Maxwell et al., 2007). Sperm selection was performed using the swim-up technique. The procedure is similar to that described by our group (Olivares et al., 2017), with some modifications: $300 \,\mu\text{L}$ of fresh sperm was carefully placed in the bottom of a 15 mL tube containing 3 mL of modified Fert-TALP, held at a 45° angle and incubated for 45 min at 38 °C in a humidified 5% CO₂ atmosphere. After incubation, the supernatant containing selected sperm was centrifuged ($300 \times g$, 8 min). Sperm concentration of the pellet was determined using a Neubauer counting chamber following dilution of the spermatozoa (1:400).

6.3.6 EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS AND INCUBATION OF RAM SPERMATOZOA WITH OR WITHOUT BOF

Following completion of the swim-up technique, four groups were created. The POSControl group was placed in a Fert-TALP medium, which is commonly used for in vitro fertilization (IVF). This group contained 114 mM NaCl, 3.1 mM KCl, 0.4 mM NaH₂PO₄, 10 mM sodium lactate (60%), 25 mM NaHCO₃, 10 µg/mL phenol red (0.5%), 1.4 mM caffeine, 2.0 mM CaCl₂2H₂O, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, 10 mM Hepes, 6 mg/mL BSA (fatty acid free), 0.45 mM sodium pyruvate, [1x] antibiotic/antimycotic solution (ATB/ATM), 5 IU/mL heparine, 1.47 mM hypotaurine, 29.4 mM penicillamine and 0.14 mM epinephrine. The NEGControl group was placed in the same medium without the capacitating agents (caffeine, heparine, penicillamine, hypotaurine and epinephrine). This group contained 114 mM NaCl, 3.1 mM KCl, 0.4 mM NaH₂PO₄, 10 mM sodium lactate (60%), 25 mM NaHCO₃, 10 µg/mL phenol red (0.5%), 2.0 mM CaCl₂.2H₂O, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, 10 mM Hepes, 1 mg/mL BSA (Fraction V), 0.45 mM sodium pyruvate and [1x] ATB/ATM. The experimental groups utilized the same medium used for the NEGControl group supplemented with 10% FbOF or 10% LbOF (concentration used during IVF; Batista et al., 2016). After selection, sperm were supplemented in a final concentration of 8 x 10⁶ sperm / mL in all experimental groups. A separate culture well was set up for assessment at each time point and the four-well culture dishes containing selected sperm suspended in 500 µL of fertilization medium in each experimental group were incubated for 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂.

Aliquots of spermatozoa were taken just after sperm selection, before the addition of different media (0 h) and at different intervals during incubation (2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h) in order to evaluate the parameters of sperm kinematics, sperm PM integrity and sperm capacitation status.

6.3.7 SPERM KINEMATICS

Computer-assisted sperm analysis (CASA) was used to assess sperm kinematics. This was achieved using a computer with an SCA[®] system (Sperm Class Analyzer Microptic, Version 3.2.0, Spain) connected to a phase contrast and epifluorescence microscope (Nikon TM H5505, Eclipse 50i, Japan) equipped with a Basler Ace ACA780-75GC digital camera. The analysis was performed in phase contrast and to a magnifying power of x100. Aliquots of 10 µL were placed on a prewarmed slide (37 °C) and covered with a 24 x 24 mm coverslip. For each evaluation, 10 microscopic fields including at least 200 cells were analyzed (Najafi et al., 2017). Software settings were adjusted for ram sperm. The standard parameter settings were: 25 frames/s, 18-60 µm² for sperm head area and curvilinear velocity $(VCL) < 10 \mu m/s$ to classify the spermatozoa as immotile. Sperm cells presenting straightness (STR) above 80% were featured as progressive. The variables analyzed were: total motility (TM; %), progressive motility (%), VCL (µm/s), straight-line velocity (VSL; µm/s), average path velocity (VAP; µm/s), straightness (STR: VSL/VAP; %), linearity (LIN: VSL/ VCL; %), amplitude of lateral head displacement (ALH; µm) and beat/cross frequency (BCF; Hz).

6.3.8 SPERM PM INTEGRITY

The parameters for this factor were determined according to Yániz et al. (2013) with slight modifications consisting of [10.000x] acridine orange and 0.5 mg/mL propidium iodide probes. Acridine orange is a PM permeable probe selective to nucleic acids that emits green fluorescence. Propidium iodide is a non-PM permeable probe that binds to nucleic acids emitting red fluorescence. The test was performed using the CASA system connected to a microscope under epifluorescence illumination equipped with the appropriate filter sets (465-495 nm excitation and 515-555 nm emission), using

x100 magnification. The analyzed slides included a minimum of 300 spermatozoa per slide (Santolaria et al., 2015).

6.3.9 SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS

Sperm capacitation status was assessed using chlortetracycline (CTC) staining as described by Olivares et al. (2017). Every day, a 0.75 mM CTC solution (pH 7.8) was prepared in a buffer containing 20 mM Tris, 130 mM NaCl and 5 mM I-cysteine. The sperm sample was mixed with an equal volume of CTC solution (10 μ L) on a glass slide. A drop of 0.22 M 1,4-diaza-bicyclo (2,2,2) octane (DABCO) was added to retard the fading of the CTC fluorescence. The slides were covered with 24 x 24 mm coverslips and CTC patterns were evaluated using a microscope (Nikon Eclipse Ci⁵) under epifluorescence illumination in 1000 x magnification with oil immersion. Cells were observed with a blue-violet 2A filter with 400-440 nm excitation and 470 nm emission fluorescence. Two hundred spermatozoa per slide were classified according to criteria defined by Cormier, Sirard & Bailey (1997). The spermatozoa were classified into either uniform bright fluorescence over the whole head (non-capacitated cells, F pattern), fluorescence-free band in the post-acrossomal region (capacitated cells, B pattern) and full fluorescence over the whole head for a thin, bright band of fluorescence along the equatorial region (acrosome-reacted cells, AR pattern) (Fig. 1) (Fraser, Abeydeera, & Niwa, 1995).

6.3.10 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was performed using Prism 5.01 software (GraphPad software, San Diego, CA, USA) and SAEG statistical software (SAEG 9.0, Minas Gerais, Brazil). The results are presented as the mean and standard error of the mean (SEM). All quantitative variables were subjected to a normality test (Lilliefors test) and homoscedasticity test (Bartlett test). When necessary, the data were subjected to arc sine or logarithmic transformation prior to a two-way repeated measures ANOVA (mixed model). The statistical model used included the effects of treatment and incubation time and their interaction on sperm characteristics. When the ANOVA revealed a significant effect, values were compared using the Bonferroni *post hoc* test.

Differences with a P-value of less than 0.05 were considered to be statistically significant.

6.4. RESULTS

6.4.1 EFFECT OF BOF AT THE FOLLICULAR PHASE OR THE LUTEAL PHASE ON SPERM KINEMATICS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

Fig. 2 and 3 illustrate the sperm kinematic parameters obtained during incubation of different media. From 2 h of incubation, the percentage of progressive motility was higher (P < 0.05) in the FbOF and LbOF groups in comparison with the NEGControl group. The velocity parameters (VCL and VAP) and other parameters evaluated by the CASA system (ALH and BCF) showed the same trends during this incubation period. The parameters of progressive motility, VCL, VSL, VAP and LIN were similar (P > 0.05) among the POSControl, LbOF and FbOF groups at 2 h and 4 h of incubation. At 6 h of incubation, all kinematic parameters (except STR and LIN) were similar (P > 0.05) among all groups. After 18 h of incubation, no differences (P > 0.05) between the NEGControl and bOF groups were observed in relation to any kinematic parameter, regardless of the estrous cycle phase. However, the FbOF and LbOF groups showed lower values (P < 0.05) for these kinematic parameters compared with the POSControl group. After 24 h of incubation, no difference (P > 0.05) among the groups was observed in relation to most kinematic parameters.

6.4.2 EFFECT OF BOF AT THE FOLLICULAR PHASE OR THE LUTEAL PHASE ON SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS AND SPERM PM INTEGRITY DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

Sperm capacitation status and sperm PM integrity during incubation of different media are shown in Fig. 4. During the incubation period, the proportion of non-capacitated cells was similar (P > 0.05) among the groups.

At 4 h of incubation, the presence of bOF at the follicular phase or the luteal phase in the non-capacitating medium (FbOF and LbOF) decreased (P < 0.05) the proportion of capacitated spermatozoa compared with the NEGControl group. In

contrast, the proportion of acrosome-reacted spermatozoa was similar (P > 0.05) among the groups for up to 6 h of incubation.

After a long incubation period (18-24 h), supplementation of bOF regardless of the phase of the estrous cycle phase (FbOF and LbOF groups) promoted an increase (P < 0.05) in the proportion of acrosome-reacted spermatozoa compared with the non-capacitated medium (NEGControl group). Furthermore, this supplementation caused a similar (P > 0.05) effect in the proportion of acrosome-reacted spermatozoa to the capacitated medium (POSControl group).

Incubation with bOF regardless of the estrous cycle phase had no effect on sperm PM integrity at any incubation interval. However, at 4 h and 6 h of incubation, the POSControl group presented a lower (P < 0.05) percentage of intact spermatozoa when compared with the NEGControl group.

6.4.3 EFFECT OF TREATMENT AND INCUBATION TIME AND THEIR INTERACTION ON SPERM PARAMETERS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

Table 1 illustrates the results of a two-way repeated measures ANOVA on the sperm parameters evaluated in this study. Treatment × incubation time interaction was considered significant (P < 0.05) in relation to most of the sperm parameters, indicating that the treatment effect was not the same at each incubation interval, and thus multiple comparisons among treatments were performed at each incubation interval.

6.5 DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of supplementation of 10% bOF at either the follicular phase or the luteal phase in a non-capacitating medium on ram *in vitro* sperm capacitation and general sperm function during a long incubation period. Three main conclusions can be drawn from our study. First, the benefits promoted by bOF supplementation were found regardless of the estrous cycle phase from which the OF was obtained. Second, heterologous OF was efficient to modulate sperm function and capacitation in fresh ram sperm. Third, although the presence of bOF did not significantly affect sperm PM integrity, it increased ram sperm kinematics for up to 4 h of incubation and increased the acrosome-reacted rate after a long incubation period.

A positive effect of the supplementation of 20% porcine pre-ovulatory (proestrus and estrus) OF on porcine frozen-thawed sperm motility compared with post-ovulatory (metaestrus) OF conditions has previously been described (Kumaresan, Johannisson, Saravia, et al., 2012). Similarly, Grippo, Way & Kilian (1995) reported differences in sperm motility when freshly ejaculated bull sperm were incubated with 40% luteal and non-luteal bOF but not with 20% luteal and non-luteal bOF. The results of the present study reveal that 10% bOF at either the follicular or luteal phase in a non-capacitating medium has a positive effect on ram sperm motility. According to the aforementioned studies, the sperm cryopreservation process and concentration of OF (v/v %) supplemented in the medium can alter sperm motility as a response to OF at different phases of the estrous cycle. Therefore, making precise comparisons between the current study and those studies (Grippo, Way, & Kilian, 1995; Kumaresan, Johannisson, Saravia, et al., 2012) is difficult because of the differences between protocols. Nonetheless, these studies also found that supplementation of luteal and non-luteal bOF had no effect on sperm motility (Grippo, Way, & Kilian, 1995), as is reported in the present research.

At 6 h of incubation, the presence of bOF did not affect ram sperm kinematics, which agrees with results reported by Kumaresan, Johannisson, Humblot et al. (2012) and Kumaresan, Johannisson, Saravia et al. (2012) who also observed no effect of porcine isthmic OF on frozen/thawed boar sperm at this incubation interval. However, when ovine spermatozoa were incubated with bOF at the follicular phase or the luteal phase over a long period, the effects on sperm kinematics were similar to those found in the non-capacitating condition but were lower when compared with those found in the capacitating condition.

Our results suggest that the positive effect of bOF on ram sperm kinematics is time dependent, with 4 h being the limit at which extra benefits can be observed when compared with the NEGControl group. Previous studies evaluated the effect of OF on porcine sperm function during a short incubation period (Coy et al., 2010; Kumaresan et al., 2014). However, the effect of OF on sperm function during a long incubation period was unknown until now. Evidence of the suppressive effects on bull sperm motility of isthmic non-luteal bOF were noted after 6 h of incubation (Grippo, Way, &

Kilian, 1995). Considering the *in vivo* situation, we hypothesized that OF components have a short-time positive effect (up to 4 h incubation) on sperm motility, while the attachment of spermatozoa to oviductal epithelial cells could be related to the promotion of a beneficial effect on sperm motility after a long incubation period (24 h) (Gutiérrez et al., 1993).

Innumerable components (mainly GAGs) present in OF participate in sperm capacitation and the acrossomal reaction process (Miller, 2015). It has been demonstrated that the presence of porcine and bovine OF results in an increase in sperm capacitation *in vitro* (Bergqvist et al., 2006; Kumaresan et al., 2014). In the current study, we observed a negative effect of bOF regardless of the estrous cycle phase on ram sperm capacitation at 4 h of incubation. This agrees with results reported by Soriano-Úbeda et al. (2017) who demonstrated that the presence of porcine pre-ovulatory OF decreases protein kinase A activity and the tyrosine phosphorylation of sperm proteins in a homologous system. In contrast, bOF appeared to have a positive effect on the acrosome reaction process. This indicates that the effect of bOF on acrosome reaction is not species-specific in ruminants. It is noteworthy that acrosome reaction plays an important role in mammalian fertilization since spermatozoa must undergo acrossomal exocytosis to penetrate zona pellucida (Buffone et al., 2014).

In the current study, bOF had no significant effect on the PM integrity of ram spermatozoa throughout the incubation period. Our findings agree with results of Grippo, Way & Kilian (1995) who also observed no effect of bOF regardless of the estrous cycle phase and region of oviduct on bull sperm viability during incubation of 6 h. However, evidence suggests that OF works to maintain or facilitate sperm viability due to the presence of oviductal protein factors (e.g. oviductin, GAGs, oviduct-specific glycoproteins and osteopontin) (Ghersevich, Massa, & Zumoffen, 2015). Coy et al. (2010) showed that 20 min of pre-exposure to porcine OF at the follicular phase could promote an increase in sperm viability. However, it is difficult to draw comparisons between this and other studies in which the sperm were pre-incubated for longer periods of up to 4 h or 6 h. A possible explanation for this finding could be the existence of a quick (20 min or even less) effect of OF on sperm viability.

In conclusion, the results of the present study indicate that heterologous OF does not differentially affect ram sperm function (sperm kinematics, sperm PM integrity

and sperm capacitation status) according to the phase of the estrous cycle at which the OF was obtained.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work was funded by Finep and Faperj. FZB is a CNPq fellow. VAPA and LRC were supported by CNPq and JMGSF, RITPB and GMB by CAPES. The authors want to thank Dr. Luis Sérgio de Almeida Camargo for allowing us to use the laboratory infrastructure of the Embrapa Dairy Cattle animal reproduction laboratory during the collection of the oviductal fluid.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

6.6 REFERENCES

- Avilés M, Coy P, & Rizos D, 2015: The oviduct: A key organ for the success of early reproductive events. *Animal Frontiers* 5, 25–31. https://doi.org/10.2527/af.2015 -0005
- Batista R I T P, Moro L N, Corbin E, Alminana C, Souza-Fabjan J M G, de Figueirêdo Freitas V J, & Mermillod P, 2016: Combination of oviduct fluid and heparin to improve monospermic zygotes production during porcine in vitro fertilization. *Theriogenology* 86, 495–502. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2016.01. 031
- Bergqvist A-S, Ballester J, Johannisson A, Hernandez M, Lundeheim N, & Rodriguez-Martinez H, 2006: In vitro capacitation of bull spermatozoa by oviductal fluid and its components. *Zygote* 14, 259–273. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0967199406003 777
- Bucak M N, & Tekin N, 2007: Protective effect of taurine, glutathione and trehalose on the liquid storage of ram semen. *Small Ruminant Research* 73, 103–108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sma llrumres.2006.12.001

- Buffone M G, Wertheimer E V, Visconti P E, & Krapf D, 2014: Central role of soluble adenylyl cyclase and cAMP in sperm physiology. *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta (BBA) Molecular Basis of Disease* 1842, 2610–2620. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.b badis.2014.07.013
- Cormier N, Sirard M-A, & Bailey J L, 1997: Premature capacitation of bovine spermatozoa is initiated by cryopreservation. *Journal of Andrology* 18, 461–468. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1939-4640.1997.tb01953.x
- Coy P, Garcia-Vazquez F A, Visconti P E, & Avilés M, 2012: Roles of the oviduct in mammalian fertilization. *Reproduction* 144, 649–660. https://doi.org/10.1530/R EP-12-0279
- Coy P, Lloyd R, Romar R, Satake N, Matas C, Gadea J, & Holt W V, 2010: Effects of porcine pre-ovulatory oviductal fluid on boar sperm function. *Theriogenology* 74, 632–642. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2010.03.005
- Fraser L R, Abeydeera L R, & Niwa K, 1995: Ca(2+)-regulating mechanisms that modulate bull sperm capacitation and acrosomal exocytosis as determined by chlortetracycline analysis. *Molecular Reproduction and Development* 40, 233– 241. https://doi.org/10.1002/mrd.10804 002 13
- Ghersevich S, Massa E, & Zumoffen C, 2015: Oviductal secretion and gamete interaction. *Reproduction* 149, R1–R14. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-14-0145
- Grippo A A, Way A L, & Killian G J, 1995: Effect of bovine ampullary and isthmic oviductal fluid on motility, acrosome reaction and fertility of bull spermatozoa. *Journal of Reproduction and Fertility* 105, 57–64. https://doi.org/10.1530/jrf.0.10 50057
- Gutiérrez A, Garde J, García-Artiga C, & Vázquez I, 1993: Ram spermatozoa cocultured with epithelial cell monolayers: an in vitro model for the study of capacitation and the acrosome reaction. *Molecular Reproduction and Development* 36, 338–345. https://doi.org/10.1002/mrd.10803 60309
- Hugentobler S A, Sreenan J M, Humpherson P G, Leese H J, Diskin M G, & Morris DG, 2010: Effects of changes in the concentration of systemic progesterone on ions, amino acids and energy substrates in cattle oviduct and uterine fluid and

blood. *Reproduction, Fertility and Development* 22, 684–694. https://doi.org/10.1071/R D09129

- Hunter R H, 1985: Experimental studies of sperm transport in sheep, cows and pigs. *The Veterinary Record* 116, 188. https://doi.org/10.1136/vr.116.7.188
- Hunter R H F, 2012: Components of oviduct physiology in eutherian mammals. Biological Reviews of the Cambridge Philosophical Society 87, 244–255. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-185X.2011.00196.x
- Ireland J J, Murphee R L, & Coulson P B, 1980: Accuracy of predicting stages of bovine estrous cycle by gross appearance of the corpus luteum. *Journal of Dairy Science* 63, 155–160. https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.S0022-0302(80)82901-8
- Kaya A, Aksoy M, & Tekeli T, 2002: Influence of ejaculation frequency on sperm characteristics, ionic composition and enzymatic activity of seminal plasma in rams. *Small Ruminant Research* 44, 153–158. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0921-4488(02)00051-2
- Kumaresan A, González R, Johannisson A, & Berqvist A-S, 2014: Dynamic quantification of intracellular calcium and protein tyrosine phosphorylation in cryopreserved boar spermatozoa during short-time incubation with oviductal fluid. *Theriogenology* 82, 1145–1153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2 014. 07.029
- Kumaresan A, Johannisson A, Humblot P, & Bergqvist A-S, 2012: Oviductal fluid modulates the dynamics of tyrosine phosphorylation in cryopreserved boar spermatozoa during capacitation. *Molecular Reproduction and Development* 79, 525–540. https://doi.org/ 10.1002/mrd.22058
- Kumaresan A, Johannisson A, Saravia F, & Bergqvist A S, 2012: The effect of oviductal fluid on protein tyrosine phosphorylation in cryopreserved boar spermatozoa differs with the freezing method. *Theriogenology* 77, 588–599. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2011.08.0 35
- Leese H J, Hugentobler S A, Gray S M, Morris D G, Sturmey R G, Whitear S-L, & Sreenan J M, 2008: Female reproductive tract fluids: composition, mechanism of formation and potential role in the developmental origins of health and

disease. *Reproduction, Fertility and Development* 20, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.10 71/RD07 153

- Mata-Campuzano M, Soleilhavoup C, Tsikis G, Martinez-Pastor F, de Graaf S P, & Druart X, 2015: Motility of liquid stored ram spermatozoa is altered by dilution rate independent of seminal plasma concentration. *Animal Reproduction Science* 162, 31–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.a nireprosci.2015.09.004
- Maxwell W, de Graaf S, Ghaoui R E-H, & Evans G, 2007: Seminal plasma effects on sperm handling and female fertility. *Society of Reproduction and Fertility supplement* 64, 13–38. https://doi.org/10.5661/RDR-VI-13
- Miller D, 2015: Regulation of Sperm Function by Oviduct Fluid and the Epithelium: Insight into the Role of Glycans. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals* 50, 31–39. https://doi.org/10.1111/rda.1 2570
- Mondéjar I, Avilés M, & Coy P, 2013: The human is an exception to the evolutionarilyconserved phenomenon of pre-fertilization zona pellucida resistance to proteolysis induced by oviductal fluid. *Human Reproduction* 28, 718–728. https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/des423
- Najafi A, Daghigh-Kia H, Dodaran H V, Mehdipour M, & Alvarez-Rodriguez M, 2017: Ethylene glycol, but not DMSO, could replace glycerol inclusion in soybean lecithin-based extenders in ram sperm cryopreservation. *Animal Reproduction Science* 177, 35–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anireprosci.2016.12.004
- Olivares C C S, de Souza-Fabjan J M G, da Fonseca J F, Balaro M F A, de Figueirêdo Freitas V J, de Oliveira R V, & Brandão F Z, 2017: Comparison of different sperm selection techniques in ram frozen-thawed sperm. *Acta Scientiae Veterinariae* 45, 1431–1442.
- Saling P M, & Bedford J M, 1981: Absence of species specificity for mammalian sperm capacitation in vivo. *Journal of Reproduction and Fertility* 63, 119–123. https://doi.org/10.1530/jrf.0.06301 19
- Santolaria P, Vicente-Fiel S, Palacín I, Fantova E, Blasco M E, Silvestre M A, & Yániz
 J L, 2015: Predictive capacity of sperm quality parameters and sperm subpopulations on field fertility after artificial insemination in sheep. *Animal*

Reproduction Science 163, 82–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anireprosci.2015.1 0.001

- Soriano-Úbeda C, García-Vázquez F A, Romero-Aguirregomezcorta J, & Matás C, 2017: Improving porcine in vitro fertilization output by simulating the oviductal environment. *Scientific Reports* 7:4316, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1038/srep4361 6
- Yániz J L, Palacín I, Vicente-Fiel S, Gosalvez J, López-Fernández C, & Santolaria P, 2013: Comparison of membrane-permeant fluorescent probes for sperm viability assessment in the ram. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals* 48, 598–603. https://doi.org/ 10.1111/rda .12132

Parameters		F value	P value
Total motility (%)	Treatment × time (interaction)	0.99	0.4766
	Treatment	0.82	0.5024
	Time	24.32	<0.0001
Progressive motility (%)	Treatment × time (interaction)	3.38	0.0002
	Treatment	6.85	0.0035
	Time	48.94	<0.0001
VAP (μm/s)	Treatment × time (interaction)	3.37	0.0002
	Treatment	4.70	0.0155
	Time	90.97	<0.0001
VCL (µm/s)	Treatment × time (interaction)	3.44	0.0002
	Treatment	1.41	0.2760
	Time	105.21	<0.0001
VSL (µm/s)	Treatment × time (interaction)	3.14	0.0005
	Treatment	5.36	0.0095
	Time	63.29	<0.0001
LIN (%)	Treatment × time	2.82	0.0014
	Treatment	7.49	0.0024
	Time	34.50	<0.0001
STR (%)	Treatment × time (interaction)	2.46	0.0052
	Treatment	5.70	0.0075
	Time	17.08	<0.0001
ALH (μm)	Treatment × time (interaction)	2.34	0.0080
	Treatment	0.21	0.8851
	Time	6.18	<0.0001
BCF (Hz)	Treatment × time	3.34	0.0002
	(interaction)	10.00	0.0004
	Time	10.90	0.0004 <0.0001
	Troatmont v time	20.95	<0.0001
Capacitated cells (%)	(interaction)	2.03	0.0227
	Treatment	6.69	0.0039
	Time	6.61	<0.0001

TABLE 1 – Two-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) on sperm parameters considering incubation time and treatment as independent variables

Acrosome-reacted cells	Treatment × time (interaction)	3.56	0.0001
(%)	Treatment	2.89	0.0678
Noncapacitated cells (%)	Time	46.65	<0.0001
	Treatment × time (interaction)	1.04	0.4290
	Treatment	0.29	0.8307
Intact cells (%)	Time	25.47	<0.0001
	Treatment × time (interaction)	0.84	0.6352
	Treatment	7.05	0.0031
	Time	39.28	<0.0001

The values highlighted in bold are statistically significant.

F value: mean-square value for the source of variation of the residual mean square.

VAP: average path velocity; VCL: curvilinear velocity; VSL: straight-line velocity; LIN: linearity (ratio VSL/VCL); STR: straightness (ratio VSL/VAP); ALH: amplitude of lateral head displacement; BCF: beat/cross frequency.



Fig. 1. Patterns of the sperm capacitation status assessed using chlortetracycline (CTC) staining.



Fig. 2. Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or the luteal (LbOF) phase on ram sperm motility [total motility (a) and progressive motility (b)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation and parameters were evaluated using a CASA system. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media.



Fig. 3. Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or the luteal (LbOF) phase on ram sperm kinematics [VAP (a; average path velocity), VCL (b; curvilinear velocity), VSL (c; straight-line velocity), LIN (d; linearity (ratio VSL/VCL)), STR (e; straightness (ratio VSL/VAP)), ALH (f; amplitude of lateral head displacement) and BCF (g; beat/cross frequency)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation and parameters were evaluated using a CASA system. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media.



Fig. 4. Effect of bovine oviductal fluid either at the follicular (FbOF) phase or the luteal (LbOF) phase on the sperm capacitation status and plasma membrane integrity of ram spermatozoa [rate of capacitated sperm (a; B pattern), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm (b; AR pattern), rate of non-capacitated sperm (c) and rate of intact cells (d; F pattern)] during incubation of 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were performed after 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate differences (P < 0.05) among treatments according to the Bonferroni test. Incubation time (0 h): moment after sperm selection and before the addition of different media.

7 CAPÍTULO III

Supplementation of 17β-estradiol and progesterone at concentrations of follicular and luteal phase in the co-culture medium of bovine oviductal epithelial cells and ovine spermatozoa reduces the sperm kinematics and capacitation

Suplementação de 17β-estradiol e progesterona em concentrações na fase folicular e luteal no meio de cocultivo de células epiteliais do oviduto bovino e espermatozoide ovino reduz a cinemática espermática e capacitação

> Artigo submetido ao periódico: Animal Reproduction Science Em: 12 de maio de 2018 Qualis: A2 – Medicina Veterinária

Supplementation of 17β -estradiol and progesterone at concentrations of the follicular and luteal phase in the co-culture medium of bovine oviductal epithelial cells and ovine spermatozoa reduces the sperm kinematics and capacitation

Vivian Angélico Pereira Alfradique^{a,*}, Ribrio Ivan Tavares Pereira Batista^{a,*}, Joanna Maria Gonçalves de Souza-Fabjan^a, Luana Rangel Côrtes^a, Gláucia Mota Bragança^a, Clara Vieira de Souza^a, Lendel Correia da Costa^a, Felipe Zandonadi Brandão^a

^a Faculdade de Veterinária, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, RJ, Brazil

* Corresponding authors:

E-mail addresses: <u>vivianangelico@gmail.com</u> (V.A.P. Alfradique); <u>ribrio@yahoo.com.br</u> (R.I.T.P. Batista)

7.1 ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the effect of bovine oviductal epithelial cell (BOEC) and ovine spermatozoa co-culture submitted to different hormonal environment on ram sperm function throughout 24 h of incubation. Ram cooled-stored spermatozoa were selected by swim-up and then co-cultured separately for 24 h at 38.5 °C under 5% CO₂ with either: (1) Fert-TALP medium (positive control - POSControl); (2) Fert-TALP medium supplemented with 17β -estradiol (E2) and progesterone (P4) at concentrations similar to follicular phase (Follicular NEGControl); (3) Fert-TALP medium supplemented with E2 and P4 concentrations similar to luteal phase (Luteal NEGControl); (4) BOEC cultured in the same medium of Follicular NEGControl group (Follicular BOEC group); (5) BOEC cultured in the same medium of Luteal NEGControl group (Luteal BOEC group). Sperm kinematics, capacitation status and integrity of plasma membrane (PM) were evaluated in different intervals. Sperm PM integrity was not affected (p>0.05) by BOEC co-culture, regardless the phase of estrous cycle. Up to 4 h, Luteal BOEC group presented lower (p<0.05) progressive motility and total motility than Luteal NEGControl group. At 4 h, Follicular BOEC group showed lower (p< 0.05) velocimetric parameters and progressive motility than Follicular NEGControl group. Throughout incubation, both BOEC co-culture groups showed a decrease (p<0.05) in their capacitation rate compared with POSControl group. Conversely, Luteal BOEC group presented higher (p<0.05) noncapacitated rate than both, POSControl and Luteal NEGControl groups. In conclusion, BOEC co-culture at either follicular or luteal phase with ovine spermatozoa decreases sperm kinematics and has a role on delaying sperm in vitro capacitation.

Keywords: Heterologous co-culture system; Oviduct; Ram cooled-stored spermatozoa; Estrous cycle

7.2 INTRODUCTION

The oviduct of non-primates is an organ that provides optimal microenvironment to ensure the fertilization process (reviewed by Suarez, 2008). After mating, millions of sperm are deposited in the female reproductive tract, but only a few reach the oviduct. Of those, many bind to the oviductal epithelial cells (OEC) and then form a sperm reservoir. This interaction between sperm and OEC play an important role to ensure sperm viability, until the occurrence of ovulation (reviewed by Suarez, 2002). Also, it is believed that the attachment to OEC promote a positive effect on sperm motility (Kawakami et al., 2001), enhance sperm viability (Yeste et al., 2009) and delay premature capacitation (Murray and Smith, 1997). Despite the beneficial effect of spermatozoa-OEC binding on sperm function have been evidenced, there are still few studies on *in vitro* co-culture aiming to mimicking *in vivo* oviductal microenvironment conditions during the estrous cycle to investigate the physiology of sperm function and capacitation process.

Oviductal epithelium consists of ciliated cells, involved in gametes and embryo transport, and secretory cells, that participate in protein secretion in the oviductal fluid (Rottmayer et al., 2006; reviewed by Ghersevich et al., 2015). During the estrous cycle, the oviduct epithelium undergoes physiological changes regulated mainly by ovarian steroids: 17β-estradiol (E2) and progesterone (P4). In presence of E2, ciliogenesis of bovine oviductal epithelium is stimulated. In contrast, P4 suppresses ciliogenesis leading to deciliation process (Abe and Oikawa, 1993). Additionally, P4 and E2 receptors, present in bovine OEC (BOEC; Valle et al., 2007), also undergo changes during the estrous cycle (Ulbrich et al., 2003). Furthermore, stimulation with these steroids promotes alterations in OEC transcriptome and, consequently, in the secreted product (Szóstek et al., 2011; Cerny et al., 2015; Pinto-Bravo et al., 2017). Considering that during follicular phase – locally within the oviduct – E2 concentration is high and P4 is low and by contrast, in luteal phase the opposite happens (Lamy et al., 2016), it is possible that throughout the estrous cycle, hormonal stimulation acts in oviductal epithelium altering this microenvironment and therefore, differently modulating sperm function.

Moreover, steroid hormones have dualistic effects on sperm function. It is known that P4 is involved in sperm chemoattraction, stimulation of capacitation and acrosome reaction processes and also in binding and fusion of sperm-zona pellucida (Guidobaldi et al., 2012; López-Torres and Chirinos, 2017). Conversely, E2 suppress acrosome reaction and hyperactivation motility process induced by P4 (Fujinoki et al., 2015), but stimulates sperm capacitation (Adeoya-Osiguwa et al., 2003; Ded et al., 2013). However, the potential roles played by dynamic changes of E2 and P4 during the estrous cycle on the regulation of sperm function are poorly known. Most of studies that evaluated the sperm function in sperm-OEC co-culture used a homologous system (Lapointe et al., 1995; Kawakami et al., 2001; Yeste et al., 2009; López-Ubeda et al., 2017). Nonetheless, heterologous system is being successfully used as equivalence to homologous system in different species (Ellington et al. 1998; Petrunkina et al., 2003, 2004), including in ovine species (Gutiérrez et al., 1993), where ram spermatozoa were able to attach to both sheep and hamster OEC. Therefore, the co-culture between ram spermatozoa and BOEC may be considered a feasible model to investigate sperm-OEC interactions.

In summary, there is still a lack of literature in understanding the basic physiology of sperm function in the oviduct during the estrous cycle. Given these indications that steroid hormones modify oviductal epithelium in different phases of estrous cycle, we hypothesized that variation in P4 and E2 concentrations alter the proteins profile secreted *in vitro* by BOEC modulating sperm function and capacitation process differently during the estrous cycle. Thus, the objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of the presence and direct contact of BOEC previously treated with E2 and P4 concentrations similar to follicular and luteal phase of estrous cycle on ram sperm function during a long-time incubation.

7.3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

7.3.1 ETHICS

The Animal Care Committee of Universidade Federal Fluminense approved this research (protocol approval: 879/2016). Moreover, this manuscript followed the guidelines of Animal Research: Reporting of *In vivo* Experiments (ARRIVE).

7.3.2 REAGENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all chemicals were purchased from Sigma Chemical Co. (St. Louis, MO, USA).

7.3.3 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN
The aim of this experiment was to evaluate the effect of sperm-BOEC co-culture supplemented with E2 and P4 at concentrations similar to either the follicular or luteal phase on ovine sperm function and capacitation status during a 24 h period. After sperm selection (swim-up), sperm were supplemented in a final concentration of 8 x 10⁶ sperm / mL in different media: (1) POSControl: Fert-TALP medium; (2) Follicular NEGControl: Fert-TALP medium without any capacitating substance, supplemented with E2 and P4 at concentrations similar to follicular phase in bovine oviductal fluid (bOF); (3) Luteal NEGControl: Fert-TALP medium without any capacitating substance, supplemented with E2 and P4 at concentrations similar to luteal phase in bOF; (4) Follicular BOEC: BOEC cultured in the same medium of Follicular NEGControl group; (5) Luteal BOEC: BOEC cultured in the same medium of Luteal NEGControl group. A separate culture well was set up for assessment at each time point and the four-well culture dishes containing selected sperm suspended in 500 µL of fertilization medium in each experimental group were incubated for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂. Parameters of sperm kinematics and sperm PM integrity were evaluated after 0, 2, 4, 6, 18 and 24 h. Sperm capacitation status and the rate of ram sperm bound to BOEC were evaluated after 0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 18 and 24 h (Fig. 4). In the BOEC co-culture groups (either Follicular or Luteal BOEC group), sperm kinematics and sperm capacitation status of BOEC-binding sperms and freely swimming sperms (unbound sperms) were assessed during 24 h of coincubation. At each sampling time, the medium containing unbound sperms were removed and replaced for BOEC co-culture medium. Then, BOECbinding sperms were sampled by positioning the pipette tip at the bottom of the wells. Five replicates were performed.

7.3.4 MEDIA

7.3.4.1 BOEC culture medium

BOEC were cultured in tissue culture medium-199 (TCM-199) supplemented with 10% of heat-treated fetal calf serum (FCS) (Gibco, Invitrogen Corp., Carlsbad, USA) and 1% of antibiotic/antimycotic solution (ATB/ATM). The culture medium was filtered with 0.22 μ m filter and stored at 4 °C.

7.3.4.2 Sperm-BOEC co-culture medium

BOEC co-culture was carried out in a modified Fert-TALP medium. This medium consisted in Fert-TALP without any capacitating substance (caffeine, heparine, penicillamine, hypotaurine and epinephrine). This medium contained 114 mM NaCl, 3.1 mM KCl, 0.4 mM NaH₂PO₄, 10 mM sodium lactate (60%), 25 mM NaHCO₃, 10 µg/mL phenol red (0.5%), 2.0 mM CaCl_{2.}2H₂O, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, 10 mM Hepes, 1 mg/mL bovine serum albumin (BSA; fraction V), 0.45 mM sodium pyruvate and [1x] ATB/ATM. The co-culture medium was filtered with 0.22 µm filter and stored at 4 °C.

7.3.4.3 Positive control group medium

The positive control (POScontrol) group medium consisted in Fert-TALP medium, which is commonly used for *in vitro* fertilization (IVF). This medium contained 114 mM NaCl, 3.1 mM KCl, 0.4 mM NaH₂PO₄, 10 mM sodium lactate (60%), 25 mM NaHCO₃, 10 μ g/mL phenol red (0.5%), 1.4 mM caffeine, 2.0 mM CaCl_{2.}2H₂O, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, 10 mM Hepes, 6 mg/mL BSA (fatty acid free), 0.45 mM sodium pyruvate, [1x] ATB/ATM, 5 IU/mL heparine, 1.47 mM hypotaurine, 29.4 mM penicillamine and 0.14 mM epinephrine. The positive control medium was filtered with 0.22 μ m filter and stored at 4 °C.

7.3.4.4 Negative control groups media

The negative control (NEGControl) groups' media consisted in modified Fert-TALP medium, similar as described to BOEC co-culture medium. The negative control media were filtered with 0.22 µm filter and stored at 4 °C.

7.3.5 HORMONAL TREATMENTS

The *in vivo* oviductal microenvironment conditions was *in vitro* mimicked as closely as possible by adding concentrations of E2 and P4 at follicular (E2 = 290 pg/mL; P4 = 6 ng/mL) or luteal (E2 = 80 pg/mL; P4 = 85 ng/mL) phase as those previous measured in bovine oviductal fluid (Lamy et al., 2016). BOEC monolayers were pretreated for 24 h before the experiment, with exogenous E2 and P4 according to experimental group. At the day of the experiment, BOEC culture medium was removed

and replaced for BOEC co-culture medium supplemented with E2 and P4 at concentration according to the phase of estrous cycle (follicular or luteal) of your respective experimental group.

7.3.6 BOEC CULTURE

Oviducts and ovaries at random phases of estrous cycle were obtained at a local slaughterhouse, transported to the laboratory on ice within 1 h post-mortem and processed immediately as follows. Once in laboratory, oviducts (n = 20) were separated from their attached ovaries and quickly washed once with 70% ethanol solution (Jand Química, São Paulo, Brazil) and two times with Dulbecco's phosphatebuffered saline (Nutricell, Campinas, Brazil). Then, oviducts were transferred to Petri dishes on ice and cleaned from surrounding tissues. BOECs were isolated by mechanical scraping of the oviduct with a sterile glass slide as previously described by Lamy et al. (2017). BOECs were then washed three times 5 min by sedimentation with 5 mL of HEPES Buffered TCM-199 supplemented with BSA (fraction V; 3 mg/mL) and 0.25% of ATB/ATM. The resulting cellular pellet was diluted 100 times (dilution factor: 1/100) in TCM-199 supplemented with 10% of FCS (Gibco, Invitrogen Corp., Carlsbad, USA) and 1% of ATB/ATM. After this, 5 mL of the cell suspension (final concentration: 2 x 10⁵ cells/mL) was seeded into tissue culture flasks (25 cm²; Corning, New York, USA) and placed in a humidified atmosphere 5% CO₂ at 38.5 °C. The culture medium was renewed after 48 h and then half-renewed every 48 h until cell confluence (7-8 days). When cell confluence was 100% (Fig. 5), monolayers were trypsinized in cocktail solution consisting 0.4 mg/mL of collagenase type I-A, 0.4 mg/mL trypsin-EDTA and 0.24 mg/mL of DNase (Invitrogen Corp., Carlsbad, USA). Then, BOECs were frozen in order to avoid the lack of reproducibility between replicates that occur in studies that use different primary cultures (Lopera-Vásquez et al., 2016). BOECs were frozen in a freezing medium (TCM-199 supplemented with 10% of dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), 20% of FCS and 0.5% of ATB/ATM) according to the follow protocol described by Carvalho et al. (2017) with some modifications. First, BOECs were cooled at 4 °C during 1 h, maintained at -80 °C for 24 h and then stored in liquid nitrogen (-196 °C). After thawing, cells (final concentration: 1 x 10⁵ cells/mL) were cultured until 100% of confluence (5-7 days) into individual wells of 4-well plates (Nunc, Roskildle, Denmark) in a humidified atmosphere 5% CO2 at 38.5 °C and used for sperm coculture. For each replicate of the experiment the same BOEC-frozen/thawed line was used.

7.3.7 SEMEN COLLECTION AND COOLING PROCESS

Before the experiment was carried out, exhaustion of extra-gonadal reserve was performed through daily semen collection for four consecutive days followed by two days of sexual rest (Kaya et al., 2002). In each replicate, fresh semen from three adult rams with proven fertility was collected using an artificial vagina. Semen was pooled with the objective of eliminating the individual factor as a variable of the analysis (Bucak and Teckin, 2007). After measuring semen volume, a sperm sample was immediately evaluated for motility, vigor and concentration. Subsequently, pooled semen was diluted with OPTIXcell[®] extender (IMV Technologies, l'Aigle, France) to obtain 600 x 10⁶ sptz/mL (da Silva et al., 2014). Diluted semen was packaged in 0.25 mL straws (IMV Technologies, l'Aigle, France), sealed and then progressively cooled to 5 °C at a rate of -0.25 °C/min (TK3000[®] equipment; TK Equipamentos, Uberaba, Brazil) during approximately 1.5 h. After cooling, straws were transported to the laboratory in a semen transport box (Botutainer[®]; Botupharma, Botucatu, Brazil) within 2 h. This semen transport thermobox maintained the temperature of the box at 5 °C for up to 36 h. In the laboratory, the straws were rewarmed to 37 °C and centrifuged (600 \times g, 7 min) to flush out the extender (Makarevich et al., 2014).

7.3.8 SPERM SELECTION (SWIM-UP TECHNIQUE)

The procedure was performed following the method described by our group (Olivares et al., 2017), with some modifications: 200 μ L of cooled-stored sperm was carefully placed in the bottom of a 15 mL tube, containing 1 mL of modified Fert-TALP, held at 45° angle and incubated for 45 min at 38.5 °C in humidified 5% CO₂ atmosphere. After incubation, the supernatant containing selected sperm was centrifuged (300 × *g*, 8 min). Sperm concentration of the pellet was determined using a Neubauer counting chamber after spermatozoa dilution (1:400).

7.3.9 RATE OF RAM SPERM BOUND TO BOEC

In each interval of incubation, medium with unbound spermatozoa was removed with a pipette and sperm concentration in this solution was calculated. The number of spermatozoa attached to BOEC was estimated at different intervals of incubation (1, 2, 4, 6, 18 and 24 h) by subtracting the number of unbound spermatozoa from the total number of spermatozoa added to each well (i.e., 4×10^6 sperm) (Bosch et al., 2001). The rate of ram sperm bound to BOEC was estimated by dividing the number of spermatozoa attached to BOEC by 8×10^4 .

7.3.10 SPERM KINEMATICS

Sperm kinematics was assessed by computer-assisted sperm analysis (CASA) using a computer with SCA[®] system (Sperm Class Analyzer Microptic, Version 3.2.0, Spain) connected to a phase contrast and epifluorescence microscope (Nikon TM H5505, Eclipse 50i, Japan) equipped with a Basler Ace ACA780-75GC digital camera. Analysis was performed in phase contrast and magnifying power of x 100. Aliquots of 10 μ L were placed in a prewarmed slide (37 °C) and covered with a 24 x 24 mm coverslip. For each evaluation, 10 microscopic fields were analyzed to include at least 200 cells (Najafi et al., 2017). Software settings were adjusted to ram sperm. The standard parameters settings were: 25 frames/s, 18-60 μ m² for sperm head area and curvilinear velocity (VCL) < 10 μ m/s to classify a spermatozoa as immotile. The sperm cells presenting straightness (STR) above 80% were featured as progressive. The variables analyzed were: total motility (TM; %), progressive motility (%), VCL (μ m/s), straight-line velocity (VSL; μ m/s), average path velocity (VAP; μ m/s), straightness (STR: VSL/VAP; %), linearity (LIN: VSL/ VCL; %), amplitude of lateral head displacement (ALH; μ m) and beat/cross frequency (BCF; Hz).

7.3.11 SPERM PM INTEGRITY

This parameter was determined according to Yániz et al. (2013) with slight modifications using [10.000x] acridine orange and 0.5 mg/mL propidium iodide probes. Propidium iodide is a non-PM permeable probe that bind to nucleic acids emitting red fluorescence. Acridine orange is a PM permeable probe selective to nucleic acids that emits green fluorescence. The test was performed by CASA system connected to a microscope under epifluorescence illumination equipped with the appropriate filter sets

(465-495 nm excitation and 515-555 nm emission), using 100x magnification. At least 300 spermatozoa per slide were analyzed (Santolaria et al., 2015).

7.3.12 SPERM CAPACITATION STATUS

Sperm capacitation status was assessed using chlortetracycline (CTC) staining as previously described by Pérez et al. (1996), modified by Olivares et al. (2017). A 0.75 mM CTC solution (pH 7.8) was daily prepared in a buffer containing 20 mM Tris, 130 mM NaCl and 5 mM I-cysteine. Semen samples were mixed with an equal volume of CTC solution and after a few seconds, 1 µL of 4% paraformaldehyde was added (Kumaresan et al., 2016). A drop of 0.22 M 1,4-diaza-bicyclo (2,2,2) octane (DABCO) was added to retard the fading of the CTC fluorescence. The slides were covered with 24 x 24 mm coverslips and stored at 4 °C overnight in the dark. CTC patterns were evaluated in a microscope (Nikon Eclipse Ci⁵) under epifluorescence illumination, in 1000 x magnification with oil immersion. Cells were observed with a blue-violet 2A (BV-2A) filter with 400-440 nm excitation and 470 nm emission fluorescence. Two hundred spermatozoa per slide were classified according to criteria defined by Cormier et al. (1997). The spermatozoa were classified into either uniform bright fluorescence over the whole head (noncapacitated cells, F pattern), fluorescence-free band in the post acrossomal region (capacitaded cells, B pattern) and full fluorescence over the whole head for a thin, bright band of fluorescence along the equatorial region (acrosomereacted cells, AR pattern) (Fraser et al., 1995).

7.3.13 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was performed using Prism 5.01 software (GraphPad software, San Diego, CA, USA) and SAEG statistical software (SAEG 9.0, Minas Gerais, Brazil). Results are presented as mean and standard error of the mean (SEM). All quantitative variables were subjected to normality (Lilliefors test) and homoscedasticity (Bartlett test) tests. When necessary, data were subjected to arc sine or logarithmic transformation prior to a repeated measures two-way ANOVA (mixed model). The statistical model used included the effects of treatment and incubation time and their interaction on sperm characteristics. When ANOVA revealed a

significant effect, values were compared by Bonferroni *post hoc* test. Differences were considered statistically significant at p<0.05.

7.4 RESULTS

7.4.1 GENERAL ASPECTS OF BOEC MORPHOLOGY DURING CULTURE

After 48 h of seeding in primary culture, active ciliary movement was observed under phase contrast microscopy. However, on Day 7 of culture, the monolayer achieved 100% confluence and the resulting monolayer presented loss of beating cilia (free cilia) from adhering cells. Cells showed similar morphology of epithelial cells presenting highly packed polygonal cells (Fig. 5).

7.4.2 EFFECT OF TREATMENT, TIME AND THEIR INTERACTION ON SPERM PARAMETERS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

Table 3 shows the results of repeated measures two-way ANOVA on sperm parameters evaluated in this study. Treatment × time interaction was considered significant (p<0.05) in some sperm parameters evaluated (VSL, LIN, STR and BCF) indicating that the effect of the treatment was not the same at each incubation time and, therefore, multiple comparisons between treatments were performed at each incubation time. When treatment and incubation time did not interact with each other (p>0.05), time effect was extremely significant (p<0.0001) in all sperm parameters and treatment effect was significant (p<0.05) only on progressive motility, and rates of sperm capacitation, acrosome-reacted sperm and noncapacitated. The rate of bound was the only parameter that was not affected (p>0.05) by treatment (follicular or luteal phase), time and their interaction.

7.4.3 EFFECT OF BOEC AT EITHER FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL PHASE CO-CULTURE ON SPERM KINEMATICS DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

Sperm kinematic parameters obtained during incubation with different media are shown in Table 4. Co-culture of BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, with ram sperm affects most of sperm kinematics along 24 h of incubation. Two hours after the start of co-culture, the proportion of progressive motility and total motility decreased (p<0.05) in BOEC Luteal group compared with Follicular and Luteal NEGControl groups (spermatozoa in the culture medium without cells). At 4 h of incubation, coculture of BOEC at follicular phase reduced (p<0.05) some sperm kinematic parameters (VAP, VCL, VSL, BCF and progressive motility) evaluated by CASA system compared with Luteal and Follicular NEGControl groups. At 6 h, sperm kinematics parameters evaluated by CASA system were not affected (p>0.05) by BOEC co-culture at either follicular or luteal phase. However, the presence and also the interaction of BOEC at luteal hormonal environment with ram sperm (BOEC Luteal group) continuous promoting a reduction (p<0.05) in some sperm kinematic parameters (VSL, LIN and STR) compared with controls groups (POSControl, Luteal and Follicular NEGControl groups).

7.4.3.1 Ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC vs unbound ram spermatozoa

Although the data are not shown, binding of ram sperm to BOEC in hormonal environment similar to follicular or luteal phase did not affect (p>0.05) the sperm kinematic parameters along 24 h of incubation.

7.4.4 EFFECT OF BOEC AT EITHER FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL PHASE CO-CULTURE ON CAPACITATION STATUS AND SPERM PM INTEGRITY DURING INCUBATION OF 24 H

The capacitation status and PM integrity during incubation with different media are presented in Fig. 6. Interaction between ram sperm and BOEC regardless the phase of estrous cycle decreased sperm capacitation process along of 24 h incubation. After 1 h of incubation, the proportion of capacitated spermatozoa was higher (p<0.05) in POSControl group when compared with Follicular BOEC group, but not with the other groups. At 4 h of incubation, the proportion of capacitated spermatozoa was lower (p<0.05) in co-culture BOEC groups (Follicular and Luteal BOEC groups) compared with POSControl group. Correspondingly, the proportion of noncapacitated spermatozoa was higher (p<0.05) in Luteal BOEC group than their respective negative control group (NEGControl group). From 6 h to 24 h, the proportion of capacitated spermatozoa continued higher (p<0.05) in POSControl group compared with Luteal BOEC group. On the other hand, the proportion of noncapacitated spermatozoa was higher (p<0.05) in Luteal BOEC group compared with POSControl group.

Co-culture of BOEC regardless the phase of estrous cycle had no effect (p>0.05) on sperm PM integrity in all incubation intervals.

7.4.4.1 Ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC vs unbound ram spermatozoa

The capacitation status of the population of ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC in comparison to the population of unbound ram spermatozoa are shown in Fig. 7. The interaction between ram sperm and BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, had no effect on capacitation status in all incubation intervals (except at 2 h). At 2 h, the population of ram spermatozoa bound to BOEC in a hormonal environment similar to luteal phase showed lower (p<0.05) proportion of capacitated spermatozoa in comparison to the population of unbound ram spermatozoa.

7.4.5 RATE OF RAM SPERM BOUND TO BOEC AT FOLLICULAR OR LUTEAL PHASE DURING 24 H OF INCUBATION

The phase of estrous cycle did not affect (p>0.05) the ability of ram spermatozoa binding with BOEC during all incubation intervals (Fig. 8). Also, no differences (p>0.05) were observed in the rate of ram sperm bound to BOEC throughout incubation time in either follicular or luteal hormonal milieu (Follicular BOEC and Luteal BOEC groups).

7.5 DISCUSSION

Oviduct reservoir not only maintain sperm fertilizing ability but it also plays a key role on sperm selection ensuring that only competent sperm population are present at the time of ovulation (Gualtieri and Televi, 2003). This study investigated the effects of co-culture between ram sperm and BOEC pretreated with E2 and P4 concentrations, similar to follicular or luteal phase on *in vitro* sperm capacitation, and general sperm function during a long-time (18-24 h) incubation. The main findings of this *in vitro* study are: (1) ram sperm co-incubation with BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, decreases sperm kinematics parameters at least until 4 h of incubation; (2) co-incubation with BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, delayed the *in vitro* ram

82

sperm capacitation indicating that an heterologous interaction could play a role in the capacitation process; (3) direct contact between ram sperm and BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, had no impact to select ram spermatozoa with high motility.

It has been reported that co-culture between OEC and sperm maintain sperm motility in several species (Pollard et al., 1991; Yeung et al., 1994; Kawakami et al., 2001; Yeste et al., 2009). However, other studies report an opposite effect of this interaction on sperm motility (Ellington et al., 1991; Gualtieri and Talevi., 2003). Our findings indicate that the direct contact between ram sperm and BOEC in a presence of hormonal concentration similar to either follicular or luteal phase promotes a negative effect in the sperm kinematic parameters. These results are in agreement with those previously reported by Ellington et al. (1991), who also observed a reduction on progressive motility in a homologous BOEC co-culture system. Indeed, attachment between spermatozoa and OEC is capable to suppress motility and maintain sperm quiescent to prevent a fall of ATP level and the reduction of the energy, ensuring adequate sperm energetic metabolism to fertilization. Conversely, when ovulation occurs - and ovulation-associated signal are released - spermatozoa detached to OEC and acquire a "hyperactivated pattern" (reviewed by Coy et al., 2012).

During a long-term of co-incubation, interaction between sperm and OEC seemed to slow down the process of membrane destabilization promoting a beneficial effect on sperm viability (Petrunkina et al., 2003). Although this positive effect on sperm viability has been described in several species (Abe et al., 1995; Kawakami et al., 2001; Petrunkina et al., 2003; Yeste et al., 2009), in the present study, heterologous OEC system appeared to have no impact on ram sperm viability. Our findings are in agreement with the results reported earlier by Guttiérrez et al. (1993), who also observed no influence of heterologous and even of homologous OEC system on ram sperm viability during 24 h of incubation. These authors suggested that sperm viability could be regulated by oviductal products (proteins, glycoproteins, amino acids and/or sugars) secreted into their surrounding medium instead of the direct contact with OEC. Also, in this study, to assess sperm-oviduct interactions we used a monolayer model, which has a flat surface. During sperm transport through oviduct, sperm bind to ciliated cells on isthmus and that interaction prolongs sperm survival (reviewed by Suarez, 2002). Thus, we believe that the positive effect on sperm viability could be mediated by the presence of cilia on oviductal epithelial cells.

Our results indicate that the co-culture between ram spermatozoa and BOEC, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, decreased sperm capacitation rate. These data support the view that sperm contact with OEC prolongs the functional life span of sperm through selection of uncapacitated sperm. This selection prevents premature capacitation process ensuring that it does not occur undesirable spermatozoa death before ovulation (reviewed by Rodríguez-Martínez, 2007). Our results are in agreement with those reported earlier in several species, which findings indicate that sperm interaction with OEC delays and decelerates capacitation keeping cytosolic calcium concentration at basal level (Dobrinski et al., 1997; Murray and Smith, 1997; Petrunkina et al., 2003; Yeste et al., 2009).

In the present study, we observed that 1 h of co-incubation (ram sperm with BOEC) was sufficient to achieve ~50% of spermatozoa bound to BOEC and also. Throughout the incubation this rate was not reduced, indicating that ram sperm quickly bind to BOEC and they are maintained attached after a long-time incubation regardless steroids hormones influence. Recently, Lamy et al. (2017) suggested that P4 induces the release of bound spermatozoa and E2 (in concentrations above 100 pg/mL) inhibits the releasing effect of P4 on bound sperm. Although not significant, the addition of E2 in the concentration of 1 pg/mL seemed already to promote an inhibitory effect against the releasing effect of P4. In our study, the addition of 290 pg/mL E2 and 6 ng/mL P4 was considered at follicular phase while supplementation with 80 pg/mL E2 and 85 ng/mL P4 was presented in both phase of estrous cycle and the releasing effect was inhibited by the presence of E2.

In an attempt to recreate oviductal epithelium during estrous cycle *in vivo*, a previous *in vitro* study by Chen et al. (2013) reported changes on morphological (including in ultrastructural level) and functional (gene expression) aspects of porcine OEC during diestrus (P4-domination) and estrus (E2-domination) phases. In contrast, our study showed that BOEC previously treated with E2 and P4 at concentrations similar to follicular and luteal phase did not have a different effect on ram sperm function and capacitation process. This finding is in agreement with reported by Kawakami et al. (2001), who also observed no effect dependent of estrous cycle using a homologous co-culture system. Therefore, our result suggest that phase of estrous cycle seems to have no influence on modulation of sperm function and capacitation

process in heterologous OEC co-culture system. One possible explanation, is that estrous cycle-dependent changes in OECs is time-dependent of hormonal stimulation (Chen et al., 2013) and also reliant of a precise definition of estrous cycle phase (Rottmayer et al., 2006). In our study, BOEC received a previous hormonal stimulation during 24 h, while in a study of Chen et al. (2013), hormonal supplementation to mimic estrous cycle phases lasted days (diestrus: 10 days and estrus: 2.5 days). Additionally, to our knowledge, this is the first study that evaluated the effect of estrous cycle on sperm function, simulating estrous cycle phases through addition of steroids based on hormonal levels presented on oviductal fluid. Therefore, hormonal concentrations supplemented in our study are different to the concentration used in other studies that were based on physiological blood hormone levels (Rottmayer et al., 2006; Chen et al., 2013).

7.6 CONCLUSIONS

Although co-culture between ram cooled-stored spermatozoa and BOEC previously treated with E2 and P4 at concentrations similar to follicular or luteal phase with ram sperm did not affect ram sperm PM integrity, it was efficient to modulate sperm capacitation and also to promote a negative effect on sperm motility. Interaction between ram sperm and BOEC was able to cause a decrease on sperm capacitation, regardless the phase of estrous cycle, promoting a delay on sperm capacitation, which prolongs the life span of spermatozoa.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Acknowledgements

The work was funded by Finep and Faperj. FZB is a CNPq fellow. VAPA and LRC were supported by CNPq and JMGSF, RITPB and GMB by CAPES. The authors want to thank Dr. Luis Sérgio de Almeida Camargo for allowing us to use the laboratorial infrastructure of the animal reproduction laboratory (Embrapa Dairy Cattle) during the collection of oviductal epithelial cells.

- Abe, H., Oikawa, T., 1993. Observations by scanning electron microscopy of oviductal epithelial cells from cows at follicular and luteal phases. Anat. Rec. 235, 399–410.
- Abe, H., Sendai, Y., Satoh, T., Hoshi, H., 1995. Secretory products of bovine oviductal epithelial cells support the viability and motility of bovine spermatozoa in culture in vitro. J. Exp. Zool. 272, 54–61. https://doi.org/10.1002/jez.1402720107
- Bosch, P., de Avila, J.M., Ellington, J.E., Wright, R.W., 2001. Heparin and Ca2+-free medium can enhance release of bull sperm attached to oviductal epithelial cell monolayers. Theriogenology 56, 247–260.
- Carvalho, A.V., Canon, E., Jouneau, L., Archilla, C., Laffont, L., Moroldo, M., Ruffini, S., Corbin, E., Mermillod, P., Duranthon, V., 2017. Different co-culture systems have the same impact on bovine embryo transcriptome. Reproduction 154, 695–710. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-17-0449
- Ellington, J.E., Evenson, D.P., Fleming, J. E., Brisbois, R.S., Hiss, G.A., Broder, S.J., Wright Jr, R.W., 1998. Coculture of human sperm with bovine oviduct epithelial cells decreases sperm chromatin structural changes seen during culture in media alone. Fertil. Steril. 69, 643–649.
- Bucak, M.N., Tekin, N., 2007. Protective effect of taurine, glutathione and trehalose on the liquid storage of ram semen. Small Rumin. Res. 73, 103–108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smallrumres.200 6.12.001
- Cerny, K.L., Garrett, E., Walton, A.J., Anderson, L.H., Bridges, P.J., 2015. A transcriptomal analysis of bovine oviductal epithelial cells collected during the follicular phase versus the luteal phase of the estrous cycle. Reprod. Biol. Endocrinol. 13. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12958-015-0077-1
- Chen, S., Einspanier, R., Schoen, J., 2013. In Vitro Mimicking of Estrous Cycle Stages in Porcine Oviduct Epithelium Cells: Estradiol and Progesterone Regulate Differentiation, Gene Expression, and Cellular Function1. Biol. Reprod. 89. https://doi.org/10.1095/biolreprod.113.108829

- Cormier, N., Sirard, M.-A., Bailey, J.L., 1997. Premature capacitation of bovine spermatozoa is initiated by cryopreservation. J. Androl. 18, 461–468.
- Coy, P., Garcia-Vazquez, F.A., Visconti, P.E., Aviles, M., 2012. Roles of the oviduct in mammalian fertilization. Reproduction 144, 649–660. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-12-0279
- da Silva, M.C., de Oliveira Moura, L.C., Vaz de Melo, M.I., de Melo Mambrini, J.V., Neves, M.M., Henry, M.R.J.M., Snoeck, P.P. das N., 2014. Prolonged post cooling but not pre-cooling equilibrium length improves the viability of ram sperm cryopreserved in an extender containing low-density lipoproteins. Small Rumin. Res. 119, 88–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smallrumres.2014.02.006
- Dobrinski, I., Smith, T.T., Suarez, S.S., Ball, B.A., 1997. Membrane contact with oviductal epithelium modulates the intracellular calcium concentration of equine spermatozoa in vitro. Biol. Reprod. 56, 861–869.
- Ellington, J.E., Padilla, A.W., Vredenburgh, W.L., Dougherty, E.P., Foote, R.H., 1991. Behavior of bull spermatozoa in bovine uterine tube epithelial cell co-culture: an in vitro model for studying the cell interactions of reproduction. Theriogenology 35, 977–989.
- Fraser, L.R., Abeydeera, L.R., Niwa, K., 1995. Ca(2+)-regulating mechanisms that modulate bull sperm capacitation and acrosomal exocytosis as determined by chlortetracycline analysis. Mol. Reprod. Dev. 40, 233–241. https://doi.org/10.1002/mrd.1080400213
- Fujinoki, M., Takei, G.L., Kon, H., 2016. Non-genomic regulation and disruption of spermatozoal in vitro hyperactivation by oviductal hormones. J. Physiol. Sci. JPS 66, 207–212. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12576-015-0419-y
- Ghersevich, S., Massa, E., Zumoffen, C., 2014. Oviductal secretion and gamete interaction. Reproduction 149, R1–R14. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-14-0145
- Gualtieri, R., Talevi, R., 2003. Selection of highly fertilization-competent bovine spermatozoa through adhesion to the Fallopian tube epithelium in vitro. Reprod. Camb. Engl. 125, 251–258.

- Guidobaldi, H.A., Teves, M.E., Unates, D.R., Giojalas, L.C., 2012. Sperm transport and retention at the fertilization site is orchestrated by a chemical guidance and oviduct movement. Reproduction 143, 587–596. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-11-0478
- Gutiérrez, A., Garde, J., García-Artiga, C., Vázquez, I., 1993. Ram spermatozoa cocultured with epithelial cell monolayers: an in vitro model for the study of capacitation and the acrosome reaction. Mol. Reprod. Dev. 36, 338–345.
- Kawakami, E., Kashiwagi, C., Hori, T., Tsutsui, T., 2001. Effects of canine oviduct epithelial cells on movement and capacitation of homologous spermatozoa in vitro. Anim. Reprod. Sci. 68, 121–131.
- Kaya, A., Aksoy, M., Tekeli, T., 2002. Influence of ejaculation frequency on sperm characteristics, ionic composition and enzymatic activity of seminal plasma in rams. Small Rumin. Res. 44, 153–158. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0921-4488(02)00051-2
- Kumaresan, A., Johannisson, A., Bergqvist, A.-S., 2016. Sperm function during incubation with oestrus oviductal fluid differs in bulls with different fertility. Reprod. Fertil. Dev. https://doi.org/10.1071/RD15474
- Lamy, J., Corbin, E., Blache, M.-C., Garanina, A.S., Uzbekov, R., Mermillod, P., Saint-Dizier, M., 2017. Steroid hormones regulate sperm-oviduct interactions in the bovine. Reprod. Camb. Engl. 154, 497–508. https://doi.org/10.1530/REP-17-0328
- Lamy, J., Liere, P., Pianos, A., Aprahamian, F., Mermillod, P., Saint-Dizier, M., 2016. Steroid hormones in bovine oviductal fluid during the estrous cycle. Theriogenology 86, 1409–1420. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2016.04.086
- Lapointe, S., Chian, R.-C., Sirard, M.-A., 1995. Effects of estrous cycle, steroids and localization of oviductal cells on in vitro secretion of sperm motility factor(s). Theriogenology 44, 119–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/0093-691X(95)00153-Y
- Lopera-Vásquez, R., Hamdi, M., Fernandez-Fuertes, B., Maillo, V., Beltrán-Breña, P., Calle, A., Redruello, A., López-Martín, S., Gutierrez-Adán, A., Yañez-Mó, M., Ramirez, M.Á., Rizos, D., 2016. Extracellular Vesicles from BOEC in In Vitro

Embryo Development and Quality. PloS One 11, e0148083. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0148083

- López-Torres, A.S., Chirinos, M., 2017. Modulation of Human Sperm Capacitation by Progesterone, Estradiol, and Luteinizing Hormone. Reprod. Sci. 24, 193–201. https://doi.org/10.1177/1933719116641766
- López-Úbeda, R., García-Vázquez, F.A., Gadea, J., Matás, C., 2017. Oviductal epithelial cells selected boar sperm according to their functional characteristics. Asian J. Androl. 19, 396–403. https://doi.org/10.4103/1008-682X.173936
- Makarevich, A.V., Spalekova, E., Olexikova, L., Kubovicova, E., Hegedusova, Z., 2014. Effect of insulin-like growth factor I on functional parameters of ram cooled-stored spermatozoa. Zygote 22, 305–313. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0967199412000500
- Murray, S.C., Smith, T.T., 1997. Sperm interaction with fallopian tube apical membrane enhances sperm motility and delays capacitation. Fertil. Steril. 68, 351–357.
- Najafi, A., Daghigh-Kia, H., Dodaran, H.V., Mehdipour, M., Alvarez-Rodriguez, M., 2017. Ethylene glycol, but not DMSO, could replace glycerol inclusion in soybean lecithin-based extenders in ram sperm cryopreservation. Anim. Reprod. Sci. 177, 35–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anireprosci.2016.12.004
- Olivares, C.C.S., de Souza-Fabjan, J.M.G., da Fonseca, J.F., Balaro, M.F.A., de Figueirêdo Freitas, V.J., de Oliveira, R.V., Brandão, F.Z., 2017. Comparison of different sperm selection techniques in ram frozen-thawed sperm. Acta Sci. Vet. 45, 1–11.
- Pérez, L.J., Valcárcel, A., de las Heras, M.A., Moses, D.F., Baldassarre, H., 1996. In vitro capacitation and induction of acrosomal exocytosis in ram spermatozoa as assessed by the chlortetracycline assay. Theriogenology 45, 1037–1046.
- Petrunkina, A.M., Simon, K., Günzel-Apel, A.-R., Töpfer-Petersen, E., 2004. Kinetics of protein tyrosine phosphorylation in sperm selected by binding to homologous and heterologous oviductal explants: how specific is the regulation by the oviduct? Theriogenology 61, 1617–1634. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenolo gy.2003.09.011

- Petrunkina, A.M., Simon, K., Günzel-Apel, A.-R., Töpfer-Petersen, E., 2003.
 Regulation of Capacitation of Canine Spermatozoa during Co-culture with Heterologous Oviductal Epithelial Cells. Reprod. Domest. Anim. 38, 455–463.
- Pinto-Bravo, P., Galvão, A., Rebordão, M.R., Amaral, A., Ramilo, D., Silva, E., Szóstek-Mioduchowska, A., Alexandre-Pires, G., Roberto da Costa, R., Skarzynski, D.J., Ferreira-Dias, G., 2017. Ovarian steroids, oxytocin, and tumor necrosis factor modulate equine oviduct function. Domest. Anim. Endocrinol. 61, 84–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.domaniend.2017.06.005
- Pollard, J.W., Plante, C., King, W.A., Hansen, P.J., Betteridge, K.J., Suarez, S.S., 1991. Fertilizing capacity of bovine sperm may be maintained by binding of oviductal epithelial cells. Biol. Reprod. 44, 102–107.
- Rodriguez-Martinez, H., 2007. Role of the oviduct in sperm capacitation. Theriogenology 68 Suppl 1, S138-146. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2007.03.018
- Rottmayer, R., Ulbrich, S.E., Kolle, S., Prelle, K., Neumueller, C., Sinowatz, F., Meyer, H.H.D., Wolf, E., Hiendleder, S., 2006. A bovine oviduct epithelial cell suspension culture system suitable for studying embryo-maternal interactions: morphological and functional characterization. Reproduction 132, 637–648. https://doi.org/10.1530/rep.1.01136
- Santolaria, P., Vicente-Fiel, S., Palacín, I., Fantova, E., Blasco, M.E., Silvestre, M.A., Yániz, J.L., 2015. Predictive capacity of sperm quality parameters and sperm subpopulations on field fertility after artificial insemination in sheep. Anim. Reprod. Sci. 163, 82–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anireprosci.2015.10 .001
- Suarez, S.S., 2008. Regulation of sperm storage and movement in the mammalian oviduct. Int. J. Dev. Biol. 52, 455–462. https://doi.org/10.1387/ijdb.072527ss
- Suarez, S.S., 2002. Formation of a reservoir of sperm in the oviduct. Reprod. Domest. Anim. 37, 140–143.
- Szóstek, A.Z., Siemieniuch, M.J., Deptula, K., Woclawek-Potocka, I., Majewska, M., Okuda, K., Skarzynski, D.J., 2011. Ovarian steroids modulate tumor necrosis factor-α and nitric oxide–regulated prostaglandin secretion by cultured bovine

oviductal epithelial cells. Domest. Anim. Endocrinol. 41, 14–23. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.domaniend.2011.01.007

- Ulbrich, S.E., Kettler, A., Einspanier, R., 2003. Expression and localization of estrogen receptor α, estrogen receptor β and progesterone receptor in the bovine oviduct in vivo and in vitro. J. Steroid Biochem. Mol. Biol. 84, 279–289. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0960-0760(03)00039-6
- Yániz, J.L., Palacín, I., Vicente-Fiel, S., Gosalvez, J., López-Fernández, C., Santolaria, P., 2013. Comparison of membrane-permeant fluorescent probes for sperm viability assessment in the ram. Reprod. Domest. Anim. Zuchthyg. 48, 598–603. https://doi.org/10.1111/rda.12132
- Yeste, M., Lloyd, R.E., Badia, E., Briz, M., Bonet, S., Holt, W.V., 2009. Direct contact between boar spermatozoa and porcine oviductal epithelial cell (OEC) cultures is needed for optimal sperm survival in vitro. Anim. Reprod. Sci. 113, 263–278. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anireprosci.2008.08.018
- Yeung, W.S., Ng, V.K., Lau, E.Y., Ho, P.C., 1994. Human oviductal cells and their conditioned medium maintain the motility and hyperactivation of human spermatozoa in vitro. Hum. Reprod. Oxf. Engl. 9, 656–660.

Parameters		F	p value		
Total motility	Treatment \times time (interaction)	1.13	0.3319		
i otai motinty	Treatment	2 17	0 1085		
	Time	2.1/ 110/1	0.100J ~0 0001		
	Time Trootmont × time	110.41	<0.0001		
Progressive motility	(interaction)	1.47	0.1079		
	Treatment	3.66	0.0215		
	Time	50.32	<0.0001		
VAP	Treatment × time (interaction)	1.64	0.0574		
	Treatment	1.78	0.1730		
	Time	35.43	<0.0001		
VCL	Treatment × time (interaction)	1.19	0.2754		
(CL	Treatment	1 77	0 1745		
	Time	53.25	<0.0001		
	Treatment \times time				
VSL	(interaction)	1.80	0.0304		
	Treatment	1.90	0.1505		
	Time	27.17	<0.0001		
I IN	Treatment \times time (interaction)	2.05	0.0107		
	Treatment	2 14	0 1131		
	Time	15.88	~0.0001		
CTD	Treatment × time	2.03	0.0115		
SIK	(interaction)	1.07	0 1290		
	Treatment	1.9/	0.1380		
	Time Tractice and setting	11.44	<0.0001		
ALH	(interaction)	1.13	0.3338		
	Treatment	1.29	0.3063		
	Time	83.71	<0.0001		
	Treatment \times time (interaction)	1.70	0.0464		
BCF	Treatment	2 41	0.0833		
	Time	14 14	<0.0000		
	Treatment \times time	1 1, 1 T			
Canacitated cells	(interaction)	1.39	0.1246		
Supartation cons	Treatment	5.64	0.0033		
	Time	19.30	<0.0001		
Acrosome-reacted cells	Treatment × time (interaction)	0.68	0.8672		
	Treatment	5.06	0.0056		

TABLE 2 – Repeated measures two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on sperm parameters considering incubation time and treatment as independent variables

	Time	13.60	<0.0001
Noncapacitated cells	Treatment × time (interaction)	1.00	0.4743
	Treatment	3.77	0.0193
	Time	3.21	0.0059
Intact cells	Treatment × time (interaction)	0.34	0.9960
	Treatment	0.71	0.5923
	Time	10.76	<0.0001
Rate of ram sperm	Treatment × time (interaction)	0.39	0.8548
bound to BOEC	Treatment	1.86	0.2095
	Time	1.49	0.2135

		Parameters								
Treatments*	Incubation time	Total motility (%)	Progressive motility (%)	VAP (µm/s)	VCL (µm/s)	VSL (µm/s)	LIN (%)	STR (%)	ALH (µm)	BCF (Hz)
POSControl		75.5 ± 4.3	27.4 ± 4.1	74.8 ± 11.7	89.6 ± 11.5	57.0 ± 9.4	61.8 ± 4.4	75.5 ± 2.6	2.6 ± 0.2	6.7 ± 0.3
Follicular NEGControl		75.5 ± 4.3	27.4 ± 4.1	74.8 ± 11.7	89.6 ± 11.5	57.0 ± 9.4	61.8 ± 4.4	75.5 ± 2.6	2.6 ± 0.2	6.7 ± 0.3
Luteal NEGControl	0 h	75.5 ± 4.3	27.4 ± 4.1	74.8 ± 11.7	89.6 ± 11.5	57.0 ± 9.4	61.8 ± 4.4	75.5 ± 2.6	2.6 ± 0.2	6.7 ± 0.3
Follicular BOEC		75.5 ± 4.3	27.4 ± 4.1	74.8 ± 11.7	89.6 ± 11.5	57.0 ± 9.4	61.8 ± 4.4	75.5 ± 2.6	2.6 ± 0.2	6.7 ± 0.3
Luteal BOEC		75.5 ± 4.3	27.4 ± 4.1	74.8 ± 11.7	89.6 ± 11.5	57.0 ± 9.4	61.8 ± 4.4	75.5 ± 2.6	2.6 ± 0.2	6.7 ± 0.3
POSControl		$35.4\pm7.0~^{ab}$	14.6 ± 6.0 ^{ab}	55.8 ± 8.3	63.3 ± 7.4	49.5 ± 8.7	75.8 ± 6.2	85.2 ± 3.9	1.4 ± 0.1	6.1 ± 0.4
Follicular NEGControl		$40.0\pm4.9~^{a}$	$22.1\pm4.2~^{a}$	70.3 ± 10.4	78.1 ± 10.1	64.3 ± 9.6	81.5 ± 2.1	91.3 ± 1.0	1.6 ± 0.0	6.5 ± 0.3
Luteal NEGControl	2 h	41.5 ± 3.6^{a}	21.9 ± 4.6^{a}	68.9 ± 11.2	75.5 ± 10.4	63.5 ± 11.0	81.6 ± 4.7	91.3 ± 1.5	1.6 ± 0.1	7.2 ± 0.2
Follicular BOEC		24.3 ± 5.0^{ab}	$10.5\pm3.8~^{ab}$	64.0 ± 13.3	71.4 ± 12.5	58.7 ± 12.8	76.7 ± 8.1	89.1 ± 3.3	1.4 ± 0.2	6.2 ± 0.8
Luteal BOEC		$20.4\pm5.3^{\text{ b}}$	5.6 ± 1.5 ^b	49.1 ± 5.5	57.8 ± 4.8	41.1 ± 5.7	69.7 ± 4.9	82.5 ± 3.3	$1.4\ \pm 0.2$	3.9 ± 0.5
POSControl	4 h	23.4 ± 4.1 ^{ab}	9.9 ± 3.2^{ab}	55.1 ± 6.1 ^{ab}	62.9 ± 5.5 ^{ab}	48.9 ± 6.1 ab	76.7 ± 3.7	88.0 ± 1.6	1.4 ± 0.0	5.7 ± 0.4 ^{ab}

TABLE 3 – Sperm kinematics of ram spermatozoa receiving different treatments during long-time incubation (Mean ± SEM)

Follicular NEGControl		36.8 ± 4.9 ^{ab}	18.0 ± 3.4 ^a	66.6 ± 2.9 ^a	73.5 ± 3.3 a	61.0 ± 2.7 $^{\rm a}$	83.0 ± 1.5	91.5 ± 1.2	1.5 ± 0.0	7.1 ± 0.1 ^a
Luteal NEGControl		$40.8\pm6.2~^a$	19.6 ± 4.8 a	63.9 ± 5.5 ^a	71.3 ± 5.9 $^{\rm a}$	$57.5\pm4.6~^{a}$	80.8 ± 1.7	90.3 ± 1.6	1.6 ± 0.1	7.3 ± 0.3^{a}
Follicular BOEC		$25.5\pm8.5~^{ab}$	6.7 ± 3.1 ^b	34.5 ± 12.9	43.1 ± 12.8 ^b	30.5 ± 12.0^{b}	55.2 ±14.2	76.3 ± 10.9	1.2 ± 0.5	3.7 ± 1.5^{b}
Luteal BOEC		$21.0\pm3.4^{\text{ b}}$	5.2 ± 1.9 ^b	$42.7\pm7.3~^{ab}$	$52.9\pm3.7~^{ab}$	37.6 ± 8.2 ^{ab}	68.2 ± 13.5	81.4 ± 10.3	1.1 ± 0.2	4.5 ± 1.0^{ab}
POSControl		28.6 ± 6.3	11.6 ± 4.5	44.6 ± 5.9	51.0 ± 5.6	40.2 ± 5.7	78.2 ± 2.5	90.1 ± 1.2	1.3 ± 0.1	6.6 ± 0.1
Follicular NEGControl		31.2 ± 5.3	12.9 ± 2.6	49.4 ± 6.8	56.2 ± 5.9	45.6 ± 6.6	79.6 ± 3.8	91.9 ± 1.4	1.4 ± 0.1	7.0 ± 0.2
Luteal NEGControl	6 h	26.1 ± 2.4	11.2 ± 2.3	51.6 ± 8.0	58.2 ± 7.2	48.3 ± 7.9	81.4 ± 3.3	93.1 ± 0.9	1.2 ± 0.1	6.6 ± 0.4
Follicular BOEC		22.5 ± 5.2	5.3 ± 3.9	30.5 ± 13.1	39.6 ± 12.6	27.0 ± 12.8	51.8 ± 13.6	75.9 ± 8.5	0.9 ± 0.3	4.1 ± 1.1
Luteal BOEC		23.3 ± 6.2	6.2 ± 3.8	28.6 ± 9.3	37.6 ± 8.7	25.6 ± 9.0	59.7 ± 9.8	85.8 ± 3.8	0.9 ± 0.3	4.6 ± 1.4
POSControl		22.0 ± 1.8	5.1 ± 1.1	28.0 ± 3.8	33.8 ± 3.9	24.2 ± 3.4 ^a	70.9 ± 1.5 a	$86.3\pm0.5^{\text{ a}}$	1.2 ± 0.1 ^a	5.9 ± 0.4^{a}
Follicular NEGControl		20.4 ± 3.3	5.6 ± 2.3	26.5 ± 5.4	34.0 ± 4.8	$23.7\pm5.4~^{a}$	66.4 ±6.4 ^a	$88.0\pm2.3~^{a}$	$1.1\pm0.1~^{ab}$	$5.7\pm0.9~^{ab}$
Luteal NEGControl	18 h	25.3 ± 6.5	8.8 ± 4.5	29.3 ± 8.6	36.4 ± 7.8	$26.7\pm8.3~^a$	$65.1 \pm 10.7_{a}$	$88.0\pm2.8~^{a}$	1.1 ± 0.2 ^{ab}	5.6 ± 1.3^{abc}
Follicular BOEC		15.6 ± 4.7	1.4 ± 0.8	14.0 ± 3.7	23.8 ± 3.4	10.9 ± 3.6^{ab}	41.2 ± 8.9^{ab}	$72.8\pm6.1^{\ ab}$	$0.5\pm0.1~^{ab}$	$2.4\pm0.5~^{bc}$
Luteal BOEC		15.1 ± 2.9	1.5 ± 1.1	13.2 ± 5.3	22.9 ± 4.5	9.7 ± 5.0 $^{\rm b}$	33.0 ± 13.6	55.7 ± 12.2	0.4 ± 0.3^{b}	2.3 ± 1.4 ^c

POSControl		14.8 ± 1.4	1.1 ± 0.4	15.5 ± 2.8	21.3 ± 2.4	12.9 ± 2.7	$57.4\pm7.6~^{\rm a}$	80.2 ± 4.6	0.6 ± 0.2	2.9 ± 1.0
Follicular NEGControl	24 h	11.5 ± 1.7	0.7 ± 0.6	8.0 ± 3.0	18.2 ± 2.2	5.8 ± 3.0	27.2 ± 10.5	59.9 ± 10.1	0.3 ± 0.2	1.6 ± 1.1
Luteal NEGControl		17.8 ± 6.8	4.4 ± 4.1	13.2 ± 6.8	22.6 ± 5.9	11.0 ± 6.7	35.6 ± 12.7	67.7 ± 9.1	0.4 ± 0.2	2.5 ± 1.2
Follicular BOEC		16.0 ± 2.1	2.1 ± 0.4	18.0 ± 4.3	25.5 ± 4.4	15.0 ± 4.1	$53.8\pm8.2^{\ ab}$	79.8 ± 4.8	0.7 ± 0.2	3.3 ± 0.7
Luteal BOEC		12.6 ± 2.1	1.4 ± 0.5	15.2 ± 4.2	24.5 ± 4.2	11.5 ± 3.4	42.1 ± 8.9^{ab}	68.8 ± 10.6	0.6 ± 0.3	3.0 ± 1.2

Within a column, mean of values in the same incubation time followed by lower-case letters differed among them by Bonferroni test.

*Positive control (POScontrol): Fert-TALP medium; Follicular Negative control (Follicular NEGControl): Fert-TALP without capacitating substances + 290 pg/mL of E2 and 6 ng/mL of P4; Luteal Negative control (Luteal NEGControl): Fert-TALP without capacitating substances + 80 pg/mL of E2 and 85 ng/mL of P4; Follicular BOEC: Follicular NEGControl + cultive of bovine oviductal epithelial cells and Luteal BOEC: Luteal NEGControl + cultive of bovine oviductal epithelial cells.

Raw data are shown but statistical comparisons were calculated after arc sine or logarithmic transformations.



Incubation during 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO2

Analyses of sperm function, capacitation status and rate of bound ram spermatozoa with BOEC after 0 h, 1 h*, 2 h , 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation

*sperm function was not evaluated at this interval of incubation

Fig. 5. Experimental design of the study. Effect of bovine oviductal epithelial cell (BOEC) on ram sperm function and capacitation status during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂.



Fig. 6. Light micrographs of bovine oviductal epithelial cells (BOEC) in monolayer culture. (a) BOEC primary line after 2 days of culture presenting cell aggregates (arrows) capable to form vesicles (arrowheads) that float in the culture medium. (b) Confluent monolayer of BOEC primary line after 7 days of culture showing a typical epithelial morphology with highly packed polygonal cells. (c) BOEC frozen/thawed after 2 days of culture showing a non-covered area. (d) Confluent monolayer of BOEC frozen/thawed after 7 days of culture.



Fig. 7. Effect of bovine oviductal epithelial cells either at follicular (Follicular BOEC) or luteal (Luteal BOEC) stage on ram sperm capacitation status and sperm plasma membrane integrity [rate of capacitated sperm (a), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm (b), rate of noncapacitated sperm (c) and rate of intact cells (d)] during incubation for 24 h at 38 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyses were made after 1 h (except sperm plasma membrane integrity), 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate differences (p<0.05) among treatments by Bonferroni test.



Fig. 8. Sperm capacitation status of ram spermatozoa of bound and unbound spermatozoa in co-culture with bovine oviductal epithelial cells either at follicular (Follicular BOEC) or luteal (Luteal BOEC) phase [rate of capacitated sperm at follicular phase (a), rate of capacitated sperm at luteal phase (b), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm at follicular phase (c), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm at follicular phase (c), rate of acrosome-reacted sperm at follicular phase (e) and rate of noncapacitated sperm at luteal phase (d) rate of noncapacitated sperm at follicular phase (e) and rate of noncapacitated sperm at luteal phase (f)] during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 °C in 5% CO₂. Analyzes were made after 1 h, 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean \pm SEM. Different letters indicate significant differences (p<0.05) among treatments by Bonferroni test.



Fig. 9. Rate of ram sperm bound to BOEC either at follicular or luteal phase during incubation for 24 h at 38.5 $^{\circ}$ C in 5% CO₂. Analyzes were made after 1 h, 2 h, 4 h, 6 h, 18 h and 24 h of incubation. Data are expressed as mean ± SEM.

8 CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS

Ao mimetizarmos em condições in vitro o que ocorre no mecanismo in vivo, o espermatozoide ao alcançar o oviduto, prende-se as CEO, formando a reserva espermática. Esta interação atua mantendo o espermatozoide quiescente além de atrasar o processo de capacitação, prolongando desta forma a vida útil do espermatozoide até que ocorra a ovulação (revisado por CROXATTO, 2002). A ovulação leva a liberação de sinais que permitem que o espermatozoide se desprenda desta ligação, e por meio dos mecanismos de quimiotaxia e termotaxia, os espermatozoides são guiados em direção a região da ampola, onde ocorre o processo de fertilização (revisado por COY et al., 2012; revisado por EISENBACH; GIOLAS, 2006). Neste trajeto, o espermatozoide entra em contato direto com os componentes presentes no FO (principalmente glicosaminoglicanos), que atuam aumentando a cinemática espermática com a finalidade de garantir que o espermatozoide consiga alcançar o local de fertilização em tempo hábil. Além disso, ao se desprender das CEO e direcionar para região da ampola, os espermatozoides sofrem o processo de capacitação de forma ativa e progressiva coordenada pela ocorrência da ovulação e pelos diferentes segmentos do oviduto, para que então possa fertilizar o oócito ao atingir a região da ampola (revisado por RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, 2007).

Os hormônios ovarianos (E2 e P4) tem importante papel na regulação da composição do FO e alterações fisiológicas que ocorrem no oviduto durante o ciclo estral (LAMY et al., 2016a; LAMY et al., 2016b). Além disso, o efeito positivo causado pelo microambiente do oviduto na modulação da função espermática depende do segmento específico do oviduto, estágio do ciclo estral e da concentração dos hormônios ovarianos (principalmente E2 e P4) (GRIPPO; WAY; KILLIAN, 1995; KUMARESAN et al., 2014; revisado por LÓPEZ-TORRES; CHIRINOS, 2017). Possivelmente, a dualidade no efeito dos hormônios ovarianos minimizou o efeito do estágio do ciclo estral.

Os resultados obtidos em ambos experimentos indicaram que, independente do estágio do ciclo estral, o FO obtido de vaca promove aumento na cinemática espermática além disso, eleva a taxa de RA. De forma contrária, a interação direta entre espermatozoide ovino e CEO de vaca atua reduzindo os parâmetros da cinemática espermática, além de reduzir a taxa de capacitação espermática. Dessa forma, é possível concluir que o microambiente do oviduto atua de forma sinérgica, na modulação da função e capacitação espermática *in vitro*.

Como o processo de maturação dos gametas e fertilização ocorrem no oviduto, o conhecimento gerado a partir dessa dissertação, contribui para maior entendimento do modo que o microambiente do oviduto modula a função espermática durante o ciclo estral. Consequentemente, pode auxiliar futuros estudos, que objetivem aumentar a eficiência de técnicas de reprodução assistida (principalmente a PIVE) na espécie ovina, ao simular as condições naturais (*in vivo*) que ocorrem estes processos, em um laboratório (*in vitro*). ABE, H.; OIKAWA, T. Observations by scanning electron microscopy of oviductal epithelial cells from cows at follicular and luteal phases. *The Anatomical Record*, v. 235, n. 3, p. 399–410, 1993.

AUSTIN, C. R. Observations on the penetration of the sperm in the mammalian egg. *Australian Journal of Scientific Research. Ser. B: Biological Sciences*, v. 4, n. 4, p. 581–596, 1951.

AVILES, M.; COY, P.; RIZOS, D. The oviduct: A key organ for the success of early reproductive events. *Animal Frontiers*, v. 5, n. 1, p. 25–31, 2015.

BALDI, E. et al. Intracellular events and signaling pathways involved in sperm acquisition of fertilizing capacity and acrosome reaction. *Frontiers in Bioscience*, v. 5, p. 110–123, 2000.

BATISTA, R. I. T. P. et al. Combination of oviduct fluid and heparin to improve monospermic zygotes production during porcine in vitro fertilization. *Theriogenology*, v. 86, n. 2, p. 495–502, 2016.

BIANCHI, E. et al. Juno is the egg Izumo receptor and is essential for mammalian fertilization. *Nature*, v. 508, n. 7497, p. 483–487, 2014.

BERGQVIST, A. S. et al. In vitro capacitation of bull spermatozoa by oviductal fluid and its components. *Zygote*, v. 14, n. 3, p. 259–273, 2006.

BERGQVIST, A. S.; RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, H. Sulphated glycosaminoglycans (S-GAGs) and syndecans in the bovine oviduct. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 93, n. 1–2, p. 46–60, 2006.

BRIDGES, G. A. et al. TRIENNIAL REPRODUCTION SYMPOSIUM: Deficiencies in the uterine environment and failure to support embryonic development. *Journal of Animal Science*, v. 91, n. 7, p. 3002–3013, 2013.

BUCAK, M. N.; TEKIN, N. Protective effect of taurine, glutathione and trehalose on the liquid storage of ram semen. *Small Ruminant Research*, v. 73, n. 1, p. 103–108, 2007.

CEBRIAN-SERRANO, A. et al. Effect of the Bovine Oviductal Fluid on *In Vitro* Fertilization, Development and Gene Expression of *In Vitro*-Produced Bovine Blastocysts. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals*, v. 48, n. 2, p. 331–338, 2013.

CERNY, K. L. et al. A transcriptomal analysis of bovine oviductal epithelial cells collected during the follicular phase versus the luteal phase of the estrous cycle. *Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology*, v. 13, n. 1, p.1–13, 2015.

CHANG, M. C. Fertilizing capacity of sperm deposited into the fallopian tubes. *Nature*, v. 168, p. 697–698, 1951.

CHEN, H.; KUI, C.; CHAN, H. C. Ca2+ mobilization in cumulus cells: Role in oocyte maturation and acrosome reaction. *Cell Calcium*, v. 53, n. 1, p. 68–75, 2013.

CHEN, M. S. et al. Role of the integrin-associated protein CD9 in binding between sperm ADAM 2 and the egg integrin alpha6beta1: implications for murine fertilization. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, v. 96, n. 21, p. 11830–11835, 1999.

CORMIER, N.; SIRARD, M. A.; BAILEY, J. L. Premature capacitation of bovine spermatozoa is initiated by cryopreservation. *Journal of Andrology*, v. 18, n. 4, p. 461–468, 1997.

CORMIER, N.; BAILEY, J. L. A differential mechanism is involved during heparin- and cryopreservation-induced capacitation of bovine spermatozoa. *Biology of Reproduction*, v. 69, n. 1, p. 177–185, jul. 2003.

COY, P. et al. Effects of porcine pre-ovulatory oviductal fluid on boar sperm function. *Theriogenology*, v. 74, n. 4, p. 632–642, 2010.

COY, P. et al. Roles of the oviduct in mammalian fertilization. *Reproduction*, v. 144, n. 6, p. 649–660, 2012.

CROCOMO, L. F. et al. Peculiaridades da coleta de oócitos para produção in vitro de embriões ovinos. *Revista Brasileira de Reprodução Animal*, v. 36, n. 1, p. 25–31, 2012.

CROXATTO, H. B. Physiology of gamete and embryo transport through the fallopian tube. *Reproductive Biomedicine Online*, v. 4, n. 2, p. 160–169, 2002.

DA SILVA, M. C. et al. Prolonged post cooling but not pre-cooling equilibrium length improves the viability of ram sperm cryopreserved in an extender containing low-density lipoproteins. *Small Ruminant Research*, v. 119, n. 1–3, p. 88–95, 2014.

DAVACHI, N. et al. Differential influence of ampullary and isthmic derived epithelial cells on zona pellucida hardening and in vitro fertilization in ovine. *Reproductive Biology*, v. 16, n. 1, p. 61–69, 2016.

DOBRINSKI, I.; SUAREZ, S. S.; BALL, B. A. Intracellular calcium concentration in equine spermatozoa attached to oviductal epithelial cells in vitro. *Biology of Reproduction*, v. 54, n. 4, p. 783–788, 1996.

DUBUC, A.; SIRARD, M. A. Effect of coculturing spermatozoa with oviductal cells on the incidence of polyspermy in pig in vitro fertilization. *Molecular Reproduction and Development*, v. 41, p. 360–367, 1995.

DYCE, Keith M.; SACK, Wolfgang O.; WENSING, Cornelis Johannes Gerardus. *Tratado de anatomia veterinária.* 4^a ed. Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier, 2010. 834 p.

EISENBACH, M.; GIOJALAS, L. C. Sperm guidance in mammals — an unpaved road to the egg. *Nature Reviews Molecular Cell Biology*, v. 7, n. 4, p. 276–285, 2006.

ELLINGTON, J. E.; BALL, B. A.; YANG, X. Binding of stallion spermatozoa to the equine zona pellucida after coculture with oviductal epithelial cells. *Journal of Reproduction and Fertility*, v. 98, n. 1, p. 203–208, 1993.

FERREIRA-BERBARI, J. B. P. et al. Effect of inhibition of inducible nitric oxide synthase on in vitro capacitation of bovine spermatozoa. *Arquivo Brasileiro de Medicina Veterinária e Zootecnia*, v. 62, n. 3, p. 511–520, 2010.

FORDE, N. et al. Oestrous cycles in Bos taurus cattle. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 124, n. 3–4, p. 163–169, 2011.

FREITAS, V. J. DE F.; MELO, L. M. In vitro embryo production in small ruminants. *Revista Brasileira de Zootecnia*, v. 39, p. 409–413, 2010.

FRASER, L. R.; ABEYDEERA, L. R.; NIWA, K. Ca(2+)-regulating mechanisms that modulate bull sperm capacitation and acrosomal exocytosis as determined by chlortetracycline analysis. *Molecular Reproduction and Development*, v. 40, n. 2, p. 233–241, 1995.

GARCÍA-ÁLVAREZ, O. et al. Effect of different media additives on capacitation of frozen–thawed ram spermatozoa as a potential replacement for estrous sheep serum. *Theriogenology*, v. 84, n. 6, p. 948–955, 2015.

GEORGADAKI, K. et al. The molecular basis of fertilization (Review). *International Journal of Molecular Medicine*, v. 38, p. 979–986, 2016.

GERVASI, M. G.; VISCONTI, P. E. Chang's meaning of capacitation: A molecular perspective. *Molecular Reproduction and Development*, v. 83, n. 10, p. 860–874, 2016.

GHEORGHISAN-GALATEANU, A. A.; HINESCU, M. E.; ENCIU, A. M. Ovarian adult stem cells: hope or pitfall? *Journal of Ovarian Research*, v. 7, n. 1, p. 71-79, 2014.

GHERSEVICH, S. et al. Oviductal secretion and gamete interaction. *Reproduction* (*Cambridge, England*), v. 149, n. 1, p. 1–14, 2015.

GRIPPO, A. A.; WAY, A. L.; KILLIAN, G. J. Effect of bovine ampullary and isthmic oviductal fluid on motility, acrosome reaction and fertility of bull spermatozoa. *Journal of Reproduction and Fertility*, v. 105, n. 1, p. 57–64, 1995.

GUPTA, S. K. et al. Mammalian zona pellucida glycoproteins: structure and function during fertilization. *Cell and Tissue Research*, v. 349, n. 3, p. 665–678, 2012.

GUTIÉRREZ, A. et al. Ram spermatozoa cocultured with epithelial cell monolayers: an in vitro model for the study of capacitation and the acrosome reaction. *Molecular reproduction and development*, v. 36, n. 3, p. 338–345, 1993.

HANSEN, P. J. Realizing the promise of IVF in cattle--an overview. *Theriogenology*, v. 65, n. 1, p. 119–125, 2006.

HUNTER, R. H. F. Vital aspects of Fallopian tube physiology in pigs. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals = Zuchthygiene*, v. 37, n. 4, p. 186–190, 2002.

HUNTER, R. H. F. Components of oviduct physiology in eutherian mammals. *Biological Reviews of the Cambridge Philosophical Society*, v. 87, n. 1, p. 244–255, 2012.

HUNTER, R. H. F.; RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, H. Capacitation of mammalian spermatozoa in vivo, with a specific focus on events in the Fallopian tubes. *Molecular Reproduction and Development*, v. 67, n. 2, p. 243–250, 2004.

IBGE. Pesquisa Pecuária Municipal - Efetivo dos rebanhos, 2015. Disponível em:< https://sidra.ibge.gov.br/pesquisa/ppm/tabelas>.

IIDA, H. et al. Identification of Rab3A GTPase as an acrosome-associated small GTPbinding protein in rat sperm. *Developmental Biology*, v. 211, n. 1, p. 144–155, 1999.

IMAM, S. et al. Effect of oviductal fluid proteins on buffalo sperm characteristics during cryopreservation. *Theriogenology*, v. 69, n. 8, p. 925–931, 2008.

INOUE, N. et al. The immunoglobulin superfamily protein Izumo is required for sperm to fuse with eggs. *Nature*, v. 434, n. 7030, p. 234–238, 2005.

IRELAND, J. J.; MURPHEE, R. L.; COULSON, P. B. Accuracy of predicting stages of bovine estrous cycle by gross appearance of the corpus luteum. *Journal of Dairy Science*, v. 63, n. 1, p. 155–160, 1980.

KAJI, K.; KUDO, A. The mechanism of sperm-oocyte fusion in mammals. *Reproduction*, v. 127, n. 4, p. 423–429, 2004.

KAWAKAMI, E. et al. Effects of canine oviduct epithelial cells on movement and capacitation of homologous spermatozoa in vitro. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 68, n. 1, p. 121–131, 2001.

KAYA, A.; AKSOY, M.; TEKELI, T. Influence of ejaculation frequency on sperm characteristics, ionic composition and enzymatic activity of seminal plasma in rams. *Small Ruminant Research*, v. 44, n. 2, p. 153–158, 2002.

KERVANCIOGLU, M. E.; DJAHANBAKHCH, O.; AITKEN, R. J. Epithelial cell coculture and the induction of sperm capacitation. *Fertility and Sterility*, v. 61, n. 6, p. 1103–1108, 1994.

KÖLLE, S. Transport, Distribution and Elimination of Mammalian Sperm Following Natural Mating and Insemination. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals*, v. 50, p. 2–6, 2015.

KUMARESAN, A. et al. The effect of oviductal fluid on protein tyrosine phosphorylation in cryopreserved boar spermatozoa differs with the freezing method. *Theriogenology*, v. 77, n. 3, p. 588–599, 2012. KUMARESAN, A. et al. Dynamic quantification of intracellular calcium and protein tyrosine phosphorylation in cryopreserved boar spermatozoa during short-time incubation with oviductal fluid. *Theriogenology*, v. 82, n. 8, p. 1145–1153, 2014.

LAMY, J. et al. Steroid hormones in bovine oviductal fluid during the estrous cycle. *Theriogenology*, v. 86, n. 6, p. 1409–1420, 2016a.

______. Regulation of the bovine oviductal fluid proteome. *Reproduction* (*Cambridge, England*), v. 152, n. 6, p. 629–644, 2016b.

LEAHY, T.; DE GRAAF, S. Seminal Plasma and its Effect on Ruminant Spermatozoa During Processing: Effect of Seminal Plasma on Ruminant Sperm. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals*, v. 47, p. 207–213, 2012.

LONERGAN, P.; FAIR, T. Maturation of Oocytes in Vitro. *Annual Review of Animal Biosciences*, v. 4, n. 1, p. 255–268, 2016.

LÓPEZ-TORRES, A. S.; CHIRINOS, M. Modulation of Human Sperm Capacitation by Progesterone, Estradiol, and Luteinizing Hormone. *Reproductive Sciences*, v. 24, n. 2, p. 193–201, 2017.

LUKOSEVICIUTE, K.; ZILINSKAS, H.; JANUSKAUSKAS, A. The effect of oestradiol, progesterone and heparin on bovine spermatozoa function after thawing. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals* = *Zuchthygiene*, v. 40, n. 2, p. 100–107, 2005.

MAILLO, V. et al. Maternal-embryo interaction in the bovine oviduct: Evidence from in vivo and in vitro studies. *Theriogenology*, v. 86, n. 1, p. 443–450, 2016.

MAKAREVICH, A. V. et al. Effect of insulin-like growth factor I on functional parameters of ram cooled-stored spermatozoa. *Zygote*, v. 22, n. 3, p. 305–313, 2014.

MATA-CAMPUZANO, M. et al. Motility of liquid stored ram spermatozoa is altered by dilution rate independent of seminal plasma concentration. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 162, p. 31–36, 2015.

MORALES, P. et al. Fertilization and early embryology: Sperm interaction with human oviductal cells in vitro. *Human reproduction*, v. 11, n. 7, p. 1504–1509, 1996.
MOREAU, R.; MANJUNATH, P. Characteristics of the cholesterol efflux induced by novel seminal phospholipid-binding proteins. *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta*, v. 1487, n. 1, p. 24–32, 2000.

OLIVARES, C. C. S. et al. Comparison of different sperm selection techniques in ram frozen-thawed sperm. *Acta Scientiae Veterinariae*, v. 45, p. 1–11, 2017.

PARAMIO, M. T.; IZQUIERDO, D. Recent advances in in vitro embryo production in small ruminants. *Theriogenology*, v. 86, n. 1, p. 152–159, 2016.

PÉREZ, L. J. et al. Evidence that frozen/thawed ram spermatozoa show accelerated capacitation in vitro as assessed by chlortetracycline assay. *Theriogenology*, v. 46, n. 1, p. 131–140, 1996.

POLLARD, J. W. et al. Fertilizing capacity of bovine sperm may be maintained by binding of oviductal epithelial cells. *Biology of reproduction*, v. 44, n. 1, p. 102–107, 1991.

RODRIGUEZ-MARTINEZ, H. Role of the oviduct in sperm capacitation. *Theriogenology*, v. 68 Suppl 1, p. 138-146, 2007.

ROMAR, R. et al. Effect of co-culture of porcine sperm and oocytes with porcine oviductal epithelial cells on in vitro fertilization. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 68, n. 1, p. 85–98, 2001.

RUTLLANT, J.; LÓPEZ-BÉJAR, M.; LÓPEZ-GATIUS, F. Ultrastructural and rheological properties of bovine vaginal fluid and its relation to sperm motility and fertilization: a review. *Reproduction in domestic animals*, v. 40, n. 2, p. 79–86, 2005.

SALICIONI, A. M. et al. Signalling pathways involved in sperm capacitation. Society of Reproduction and Fertility supplement, v. 65, p. 245–259, 2007.

SAUNDERS, C. M.; SWANN, K.; LAI, F. A. PLCζ, a sperm-specific PLC and its potential role in fertilization. *Biochemical Society Symposia*. Anais...Portland Press Limited,2007 Disponível em: http://symposia.biochemistry.org/content/74/23.abstract. Acesso em: 4 jan. 2017

SEYTANOGLU, A. et al. Oviductal Cell Proteome Alterations during the Reproductive Cycle in Pigs. *Journal of Proteome Research*, v. 7, n. 7, p. 2825–2833, 2008.

SOUZA-FABJAN, J. M. G. et al. In vitro production of small ruminant embryos: Late improvements and further research. *Theriogenology*, v. 81, n. 9, p. 1149–1162, 2014.

STEIN, K. K. Sperm-egg fusion: events at the plasma membrane. *Journal of Cell Science*, v. 117, n. 26, p. 6269–6274, 2004.

SUAREZ, S. S. Mammalian sperm interactions with the female reproductive tract. *Cell and Tissue Research*, v. 363, n. 1, p. 185–194, 2016.

TALBOT, P.; SHUR, B. D.; MYLES, D. G. Cell Adhesion and Fertilization: Steps in Oocyte Transport, Sperm-Zona Pellucida Interactions, and Sperm-Egg Fusion1. *Biology of Reproduction*, v. 68, n. 1, p. 1–9, 2003.

TAYLOR, U. et al. Interaction of Intact Porcine Spermatozoa with Epithelial Cells and Neutrophilic Granulocytes during Uterine Passage. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals*, v. 43, n. 2, p. 166–175, 2008.

THÉRIEN, I.; MOREAU, R.; MANJUNATH, P. Major proteins of bovine seminal plasma and high-density lipoprotein induce cholesterol efflux from epididymal sperm. *Biology of Reproduction*, v. 59, n.4, p. 768–776, 1998.

TOKUHIRO, K. et al. Protein disulfide isomerase homolog PDILT is required for quality control of sperm membrane protein ADAM3 and male fertility [corrected]. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, v. 109, n. 10, p. 3850–3855, 2012

TSAI, P. S. et al. Syntaxin and VAMP association with lipid rafts depends on cholesterol depletion in capacitating sperm cells. *Molecular Membrane Biology*, v. 24, n. 4, p. 313–324, 2007.

VISCONTI, P. E. et al. Novel signaling pathways involved in sperm acquisition of fertilizing capacity. *Journal of reproductive immunology*, v. 53, n. 1, p. 133–150, 2002.

VISCONTI, P. E.; KOPF, G. S. Regulation of protein phosphorylation during sperm capacitation. *Biology of Reproduction*, v. 59, n. 1, p. 1–6, 1998.

VISCONTI, P. E. Understanding the molecular basis of sperm capacitation through kinase design. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, v. 106, n. 3, p. 667–668, 2009.

WAKAYAMA, T. et al. Effect of hypotaurine on in vitro fertilization and production of term offspring from in vitro-fertilized ova of the Japanese field vole, Microtus montebelli. *Biology of reproduction*, v. 54, n. 3, p. 625–630, 1996.

WASSARMAN, P. M. Mammalian fertilization: molecular aspects of gamete adhesion, exocytosis, and fusion. *Cell*, v. 96, n. 2, p. 175–183, 1999.

WASSARMAN, P. M.; JOVINE, L. LITSHER, E. S. A profile of fertilization in mammals. *Nature cell biology*, v. 3, n. 2, p. 59–64, 2001.

WAY, A. L.; KILLIAN, G. J. Capacitation and induction of the acrosome reaction in bull spermatozoa with norepinephrine. *Journal of Andrology*, v. 23, n. 3, p. 352–357, 2002.

WIJAYAGUNAWARDANE, M. P. B. et al. Local distributions of oviductal estradiol, progesterone, prostaglandins, oxytocin and endothelin-1 in the cyclic cow. *Theriogenology*, v. 49, n. 3, p. 607–618, 1998.

XIA, J.; REN, D. The BSA-induced Ca(2+) influx during sperm capacitation is CATSPER channel-dependent. *Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology*, v. 7, n. 1, p. 119–128, 2009.

YANG, X.; JIANG, S.; FOOTE, R. H. Bovine oocyte development following different oocyte maturation and sperm capacitation procedures. *Molecular Reproduction and Development*, v. 34, n. 1, p. 94–100, 1993.

YÁNIZ, J. L. et al. Comparison of membrane-permeant fluorescent probes for sperm viability assessment in the ram. *Reproduction in Domestic Animals = Zuchthygiene*, v. 48, n. 4, p. 598–603, 2013.

YESTE, M. et al. Direct contact between boar spermatozoa and porcine oviductal epithelial cell (OEC) cultures is needed for optimal sperm survival in vitro. *Animal Reproduction Science*, v. 113, n. 1–4, p. 263–278, 2009.

ZHU, W. Effect of human oviductal epithelial cell cultural medium on cryopreserved human sperm survival. *Cell Biology International*, v. 25, n. 10, p. 1025–1027, 2001.

9.1 APROVAÇÃO PELO COMITÊ DE ÉTICA NO USO DE ANIMAIS DA UFF

