belmontvetsfarm
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MARCH 2020

BELMONT FARM & EQUINE VETS

XL Vets Farm

FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER

Calf Scours

Rotavirus/coronavirus

Rotavirus infection is a common cause of diarrhoea in young calves with coronavirus being less common but more severe when it does occur.

Calves are most commonly affected at 8 to 14 days old when there is an acute onset of diarrhoea with the passage of very watery yellow/green faeces. Typical early signs include a reluctance to stand and drink, mild depression and salivation. The calf becomes dehydrated with sunken eyes and tight and inelastic skin and is usually unable to stand.

The diarrhoeic calf should be isolated in a dry, well-bedded pen. 1-2 litres of oral electrolyte should be given 4 times daily however intravenous fluids given by a vet are essential in cases where the calf is unable to stand unaided.

Oral antibiotics are not necessary and other, injectable, antibiotics should be used to control other infections that may be present, e.g. navel ill and calf diphtheria. As the calf begins to improve again then alternate milk and electrolyte solution should be fed every four hours gradually reducing the number of electrolyte feeds given until a total return to milk is achieved.

Enterotoxigenic E. coli

The disease characteristically affects calves aged 1-7 days old when there is sudden onset of profuse yellow/white diarrhoea causing rapid and severe dehydration. The calf quickly becomes recumbent. Accumulation of fluid in the abomasum and intestines gives the abdomen a bloated appearance. Disease would typically follow introduction of infection into the herd with contamination of the calving environment and infection of newborn calves.

Prevention

Rotavirus, Coronavirus and E.coli are all easily preventable via the vaccination of the dam with Bovigen scour. Cows injected with one dose of bovigen scour into the muscle 3-12 weeks before calving will confer protection for rotavirus, coronavirus and E. Coli to the calf via colostrum – so always ensure the calves are getting sufficient colostrum in the first 6 hours of life!

Cryptosporidiosis

Cryptosporidiosis is a problem relating to hygiene and immunity, particularly in group pens.

Diarrhoea is caused by the physical loss of absorptive area of the small intestine and is complicated by the viral infections discussed above.

There is profuse yellow/green diarrhoea with much mucus present. There is only mild dehydration but the calf rapidly loses condition over 2-5 days and has a dull, tucked-up appearance. Whilst infection rates are high, the mortality rate in uncomplicated cases is usually low.

In uncomplicated cases ensure that the scouring calf is properly hydrated and use oral electrolyte solutions as necessary. Halofuginone lactate is licensed for the prevention and treatment of diarrhoea caused by C. parvum although the calf weight must be accurately calculated for correct dosage. Cryptosporidiosis is a zoonotic disease (can affect man). Children and the elderly are most at risk when handling calves, less so contaminated boots/clothing and other indirect sources of infection.

Easter Opening Hours

Friday April 10th - Closed

Saturday April 11th - Open 8:30am-12pm
Hereford Office Only

Sunday April 12th - Closed

Monday April 13th - Closed

Tuesday April 14th - Normal Opening Hours Resume

Available 24 hours for emergencies - Call the office for the details of the vets on call.

Hereford Office: 01432 351471
Bromyard Office: 01885 488440
Ledbury Office: 01531 806129

Clinical Vets: Dominic Alexander • Will Allman • Mike Bellamy • Andrew Cooke • Nick Gibbon • James Hipperson • Hannah Mitchell
Alex O'Malley • Matthew Pugh • Caroline Rank • Amelia Stevens • Harry Walby • Charlotte Watkins
TB Testers: Jacek (Jack) Andrychiewicz • Petre Balanescu • Ovidiu Mircea-Oltean • Tudor Patcas • Diego Sainz Garcia • Javier Sisamon • Krasimir (Kris) Stefanov
Support staff: Michelle Harris • Sybil Legge • Laura Langford • Alice Mainwaring • Ros O'Sullivan • Sophie Powell • Andrea Smith
Pam Strange • Victoria Tully • Millie Whitlock

Hypothermia in lambs (March 2020)

At this time of year lambs can lose body heat very quickly and when coupled with poor feed intakes this can rapidly lead to cases of hypothermia. The early signs of hypothermia can easily be over looked and deteriorate to severe hypothermia and death if not recognised and treated appropriately.

Any lambs displaying signs of lethargy, tucked up posture, unwillingness to follow the ewe or general distress should have their temperature taken. The normal rectal temperature for lambs is 39-40 DC.

Temperature	Status
39-40°C	Normal
37-39°C	Mild Hypothermia
Less than 37°C	Severe Hypothermia

When a lamb is identified as having a sub normal temperature the action you take is dependent not only on the ***temperature*** but also the ***age*** of the lamb.

Lambs under 5 hours of age have a brown fat reserve which acts as an energy source to keep them warm. However, if conditions are severe or first colostral intake delayed these reserves can be depleted soon after birth. Severely hypothermic lambs less than 5 hours old will usually respond well to being dried and placed in a warming box. That said it is still important to get a good quality and quantity of colostrum into these lambs as soon as possible and ideally within the first 4-6 hours of life.

When a lamb is over 5 hours of age and identified as severely hypothermic, they must be assessed for ability to hold their head up and swallow. Those that are able to hold their head up and swallow can be stomach tubed then dried and warmed. Those that are unable to swallow must receive an intraperitoneal injection of 20% glucose solution at 10ml/Kg body weight.

(Note: Never attempt to stomach tube a lamb that is unable to swallow as it is possible to incorrectly place the tube in the airway).

Glucose solution should be administered using a 1" 19 gauge hypodermic needle, injecting at a 45 degree angle toward the rump of the lamb from a sterile area 2.5cm to the side and 2.5cm below the navel.

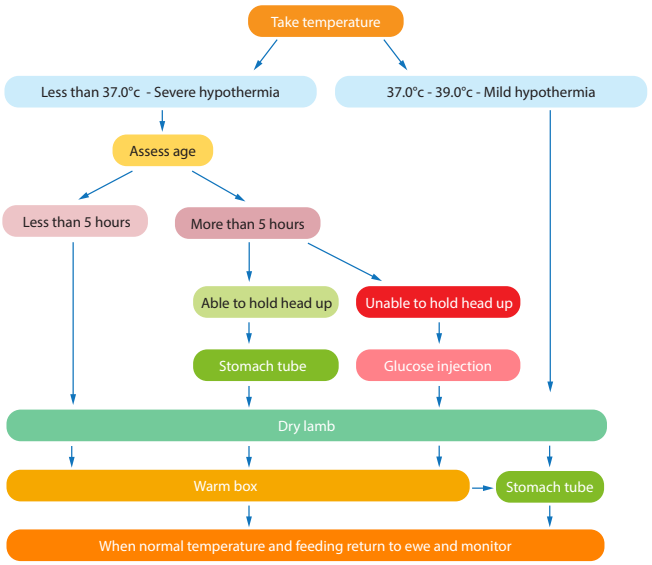
Please have a vet show you how to do this or attend one of our lambing courses.

Out of hours

A reminder that if there is ever any difficulty in reaching the vet on call out of hours, we have a permanent answering service, Phoneta, who will take your call and then go on to contact the relevant vet.
They can be reached on 01432 381440.

BELMONT FARM & EQUINE VETS

Hypothermia Decision Tree



NSAID use around Lambing and Calving

With lambing and calving in full flow it's a great time of year to emphasise the benefits of using non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) like Metacam®. With their ability to relieve pain, reduce swelling, and minimise the effect of toxic shock, NSAIDs have been shown to significantly improve welfare in dams if administered around the time of lambing or calving.

By reducing pain and swelling at this critical stage, cow's and ewe's mothering abilities are not hampered, allowing better nursing by their progeny ensuring better colostrum intake and a much quicker return to productivity. We would thoroughly recommend having a bottle on hand to use in all traumatic birthings. Bottles of 50 and 100ml are available, or we can dispense individual doses for smaller flocks.

Drug	Route	Duration of action	Cattle Dose	Sheep Dose
Metacam 20mg/ml	SC or IV in cattle IM in sheep	3 days	1ml/40kg	1ml/20kg *(off license)*
Kelaprofen 10%	IM or IV	1 day	1ml/33kg	1ml/33kg *(off license)*

HEREFORD: **01432 351471** • BROMYARD: **01885 488440** • LEDBURY: **01531 806129**

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