

Lambing Club

Now that lambing season is encroaching we would like to remind you of the lambing club we offer;

- All lambings seen during our opening hours are **FREE**
- All lambings seen out of hours are **HALF PRICE**
- All ewe caesareans are **HALF PRICE**
- 10% discount on the following lambing supplies:
Lambing Ropes, lubricants, colostrum and lamb feeders

Annual Membership:

Based on the previous year's usage

Less than 8 lambings or prolapses **£50.00 + VAT**
8 or more **£100.00 + VAT**

For anymore information please speak to the surgery

REMINDER

When barren ewes are found at scanning MSD are paying the lab fees for the blood tests- if this is of any interest please contact the surgery to find out more.



E-Mail TB Test Results

If you would like to receive an e-mail copy of your TB tests please can you let the Moretonhampstead office know: debbie@moorgatevets.eclipse.co.uk

ARE YOU READY FOR LAMBING TIME?

Disinfectant for hands, boots and equipment

Gloves

Heat-lamp or warming box

Lambing ropes

Lamb feeder and stomach tubes

Lubricant – one with added antiseptic is useful

Marker Spray

Medicines (Essentials):

- Solution containing Calcium, Magnesium and Dextrose for adult ewes
- Electrolytes for scouring animals
- 2% Iodine Solution for navel care
- Medicines (Dependent on flock size):
 - Broad spectrum injectable antibiotic
 - Anti-inflammatory
 - Propylene Glycol BP (pregnancy toxæmia/twin lamb)
 - Respiratory Stimulant Drops
 - Watery mouth Prevention

Milk and colostrum powder

Needles and syringes

Note pad and pencil (writes in wet conditions)

LUNGWORM

Lungworm (*Dictyocaulus viviparus*) is the parasite which causes parasitic bronchitis in cattle, also known as 'hoose' or 'husk'. The disease is characterised by coughing and breathing problems and typically, although not exclusively, affects first season grazing animals on permanent or semi-permanent pastures between the months of July and September.

Lifecycle

As with gutworms, the infective stage is the L3 larvae which are picked up from the pasture by grazing cattle.

Once ingested, the L3 larvae pass through the intestinal wall and travel to the lungs, about one week after initial infection. The larvae pass through the bronchioles to end up in the bronchi and trachea, where they mature to the adult worm stage.

Adult female worms produce eggs which hatch into the first stage larvae (L1) almost immediately. The L1 larvae travel up, or are coughed up, the trachea, are swallowed and then pass out in the faeces onto the pasture.

Whereas with gutworms it is eggs that are passed in the faeces, lungworm is unique in that larvae are passed in the faeces. The larvae develop within the dung pat to become the infective stage, L3. This can take between 12 and four days dependent on weather conditions, with the rate of development increasing the warmer the weather is.



The L3 larvae move away from the faecal pat onto the grass with the aid of the fungus *Pilobolus*, which grows naturally on the surface of the dung pat, ready to be picked up by grazing cattle.

The initial infection on pasture can come from overwintered larvae deposited the previous year. However, some animals in the herd can act as silent carriers, with a number of adult worms in the lungs producing eggs and subsequently larvae passing onto the grass.

Just 200 larvae can develop into 70 adult worms, which in turn can produce 2.5 million larvae by 30 days post-ingestion, so it is easy to see how quickly infection levels on pasture can escalate!

Clinical Signs

Clinical signs vary from mild to severe. Within any group of affected animals there is often a range of signs of infection among animals.

Mildly affected animals tend only to cough occasionally, especially when being moved, for example from one field to another. Moderately affected animals will cough even at rest and their breathing will be faster and more laboured. Severely affected animals show



very fast, laboured breathing and in an attempt to get air into their lungs, frequently adopt the classic 'air-hunger' position of mouth-breathing with the head and neck outstretched. Animals often have a deep harsh cough, frothy mouths and won't eat.

A small proportion of animals may die from post-patent parasitic bronchitis. However, most cattle will gradually recover, although a complete return to normality may take months. It is not uncommon for cattle to develop secondary infections with bacteria and/or viruses, as these infections take the opportunity to infect damaged tissue which developed after lungworm infection. The real crime of lungworm is that even where animals recover; there can be significant lung damage with ongoing impact on their productivity and profitability to add to the veterinary costs.

Youngstock: First season grazing cattle tend to be the most susceptible to disease, as they have not had the chance to acquire any immunity prior to exposure. A vaccine is available to stimulate an immune response prior to animals going out to pasture.

Adult cows: May have built up some immunity to lungworm as youngstock, either naturally or via vaccination, but this only lasts for up to six months (ie that grazing season) and they need to face a natural 'booster' each year either from taking in sufficient lungworm larvae from the pasture or from vaccination.

Treatment

Lungworm can be treated with anthelmintics; Clear drenches, or white and yellow drenches which have no persistent activity and so only kill the worms present at the time of treatment. Cattle continuing to graze infected pastures are, therefore, at risk of becoming re-infected quite quickly.

The advantage of the clear drenches is that they provide persistent activity, so preventing re-infection for the period of persistency.

Since the diagnosis of lungworm is largely based on clinical signs, for maximum effect treatment should be given as soon after diagnosis as possible to minimise the impact of the parasite. Furthermore, although only a small number of animals may be showing signs of infection, all cattle in the herd are at risk and may be suffering a reduction in productivity. Therefore, all cattle in the herd should be treated.

Control: Immunity

Lungworm may be controlled by using preventative worming programs with products which have persistent activity against lungworm. Alternatively animals may be vaccinated prior to turn out to provide immunity. Two doses of live vaccine need to be given to calves at an interval of four weeks and in order to allow a high level of immunity to develop vaccinated calves should be protected from challenge until two weeks after their second dose. It is important that all calves are vaccinated before they go to pasture.