

In this issue: Digital Dermatitis review, Gold Cup Open Day, Faecal Egg Count Postal Packs, Pre-Movement TB Testing

Digital Dermatitis

I (Harriet) recently attended the annual Cattle Lameness Conference and thought I'd share with you the latest research and advice on Digital Dermatitis. The information given below is based on an extremely successful case study; at the start of the study 37% of the 150 cow herd had a DD lesion. At the 5 month review only one recurring lesion was identified in the group of cows that had previously had lesions and no new cases had been found at all.

There are 4 main components to controlling DD on farm:

1. **IDENTIFICATION** of ALL cows with an active/ recurring DD lesion
2. **BLITZ TREATMENT** of ALL infected cows
3. **PREVENTION** through footbathing and addressing hygiene
4. **MONITORING**

Identification:

Wash with low pressure hose in parlour, inspect with torch / mirror.
Mark and draft off
Don't just draft off lame cows otherwise you will miss a lot!

Blitz treatment:

Due to the cow being the main source of infection to the rest of the herd **all** infected cows must be blitz treated. This is the key to getting on top of it. If you treat the odd one now and again there will be many still spreading the infection.



Classifying lesions:

M1, an early lesion just beginning

M2, active lesion; angry and red!

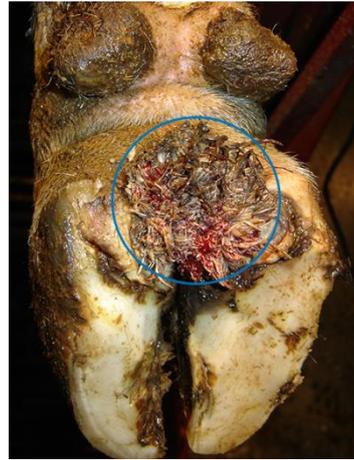
M3, acute lesion has healed, a scab has formed



M4, raised wart like growth due to chronic infection



M4.1 new lesion on a chronic lesion



Being aware of the stage of the infection will help you to determine what is going on on your farm.

Treatment:

Important: footbathing is NOT a treatment protocol!!

- Wash lesion with clean water and interdigital space
- Dry gently
- Spray with licensed topical oxytetracycline spray (e.g. Engemycin or Terramycin spray)
- Leave to dry 30 seconds
- Spray again
- Foot down and return to housing

On each cow this MUST be repeated for 3 days in a row. Footbathing should not be carried out in this 3 day treatment window. There may be the odd cow that needs a couple more days treatment to get to the healing phase (M3).

Prevention:

Foot bathing with copper sulphate and formalin have the largest evidence base and are the most widely used on farms. Both seem to be effective when used at concentrations of 1-5% for formalin and 2-5% for copper sulphate. Both have their issues with handling and disposal, formalin is a carcinogen and therefore training must be provided to those handling it and health and safety measures implemented.

Footbath design:

Long and narrow footbaths are preferred to improve disinfection and as long as they are placed strategically they should not disrupt cow flow. They must be at least 3.6m in length to allow for three foot placements and should be 60 cm wide with a 26cm high entrance and exit step. To keep it as easy as possible you can fit a drain pipe and bung for emptying and refilling. You can also have an overflow pipe at 10cm to act as a filling guide to prevent overflowing and dilution.

Frequency:

This depends on the farm situation and severity of the issues with digital dermatitis, the case study we talked about used 2.5% formalin daily with huge success. Don't forget to footbath the dry cows twice per week.

Monitoring:

Monitoring during milking at 4-6 week intervals and at foot trimmer visits.

What not to do:

- We can no longer justify the use of antibiotic footbaths. The industry is facing increasing pressure to reduce the use of antibiotics and to use them responsibly. If using them on the whole herd this is considered prophylactic use and can no longer be justified. Furthermore, because the antibiotics are not licensed they therefore carry a statutory 7-day milk withhold.
- The use of injectable antibiotics is not recommended.
- There is no benefit to bandaging DD lesions.

Key take home messages:

- The cow with an active lesion is the main reservoir for transmission of DD on farm. DD does not survive long in slurry but it is an effective transport medium short term.
- The spirochaete bacteria can take on an encysted form with recurrence of infections hence the need to footbath and treat cases quickly.
- To get on top of the situation a short term intense effort should be made to treat all infected stock at once to cut the reservoirs of infection.
- The cow must be treated with oxytet spray for 3 days in a row. A very severe case may need prolonged treatment for up to 6 days.
- Antibiotic footbaths, systemic treatment and bandaging are all no nos!
- Formalin and copper sulphate are equally as effective in prevention.

Gold Cup Open Day

Wednesday 28th June
10.30am – 4.00pm

Pilsdon Dairy Farm,
Pilsdon, Bridport, Dorset,
DT6 5NY



This year's gold cup winners, the Bugler Family, are kindly hosting an open day on Wednesday 28th June with farm talks taking place between midday – 13.30pm, foot-trimming demonstrations, and an opportunity to visit the new calf rearing facility later in the afternoon.

I (Matthew Burge) used to attend this farm in my old job in Devon. The Buglers are a lovely family and very progressive dairy farmers, so for those interested in their type of dairy system there will no doubt be some useful information on hand. Look forward to seeing some of you there.

Visit <http://www.rabdf.co.uk/forthcoming-events/2017/6/28/gold-cup-open-day> for more information and to register. Registration is free but must be done by the 27th June.

Faecal Egg Count Postal Packs

We have put together faecal egg count postal packs to make it easier for those who live further from the practice to submit samples for testing. Each pack can be used to submit a mixed sample from a group of animals or an individual sample if required. The pack can be used to sample sheep, goats, cattle or camelids. Detailed sampling and packaging instructions are provided within each pack along with a pre-paid envelope to return the sample in.

You can request the tests we run; depending on which parasites are of concern. We suggest regular worm egg count & coccidiosis counts throughout the spring-summer for lambs, calves, goats & camelids (adults as well as youngsters for goats & camelids). Worm egg counts for adult sheep & cattle, liver fluke & lungworm testing can all be done depending on risk and time of year. If in doubt as to which tests you should be performing, and when, then please speak to one of our farm vets before sampling.

One of our farm vets will endeavour to report your results within 24 hours of receiving them & will advise on the most appropriate treatment/management plan based on the results, always with a focus on using worming products responsibly and looking for ways to minimise their use.

Cost per sample (includes pre-paid return envelope, testing & reporting of results, excludes VAT):

£8.33 for Worm Egg Count & Cocci only

+ additional £8.33 for Liver Fluke + additional £25 for Lungworm

We will keep a few packs made up at the surgery which can be picked up if you're passing. If you require multiple packs please let us know in advance so we can make them up ready for you to collect. Alternatively we can post packs out to you but the postal fee for this will be chargeable.

Please be aware the weight of sample sent (mixed or individual) must not exceed 90 grams or additional postal fees will be applied.

Where convenient we encourage and welcome samples being dropped off directly to the surgery as many of you have been doing for years, especially if multiple samples need testing.



Pre-Movement TB Testing

Many of you in high-risk TB areas will sensibly pre-movement test and sell any surplus stock ahead of any statutory whole herd TB tests in case movement restrictions are enforced should the statutory TB test not go clear.

Following a recent situation we would recommend any pre-movement testing is done **before** your statutory TB testing window begins. This way should an inconclusive reactor ("IR") be found at the pre-movement test, provided it is isolated and retained on the farm for its subsequent re-test, and provided you have had no confirmed TB in the previous 3 years, the remaining animals that tested clear can be sold (provided the temporary movement restrictions that follow the disclosure of the IR are lifted by the ministry before the pre-movement test certificate expires). If the pre-movement test is done **within** the statutory TB testing window and an IR is found, this test could be counted by the ministry as a part-test of the statutory test, and all animals would then remain under movement restriction until the rest of the whole herd test is completed.