

HYPOTHERMIA IN LAMBS

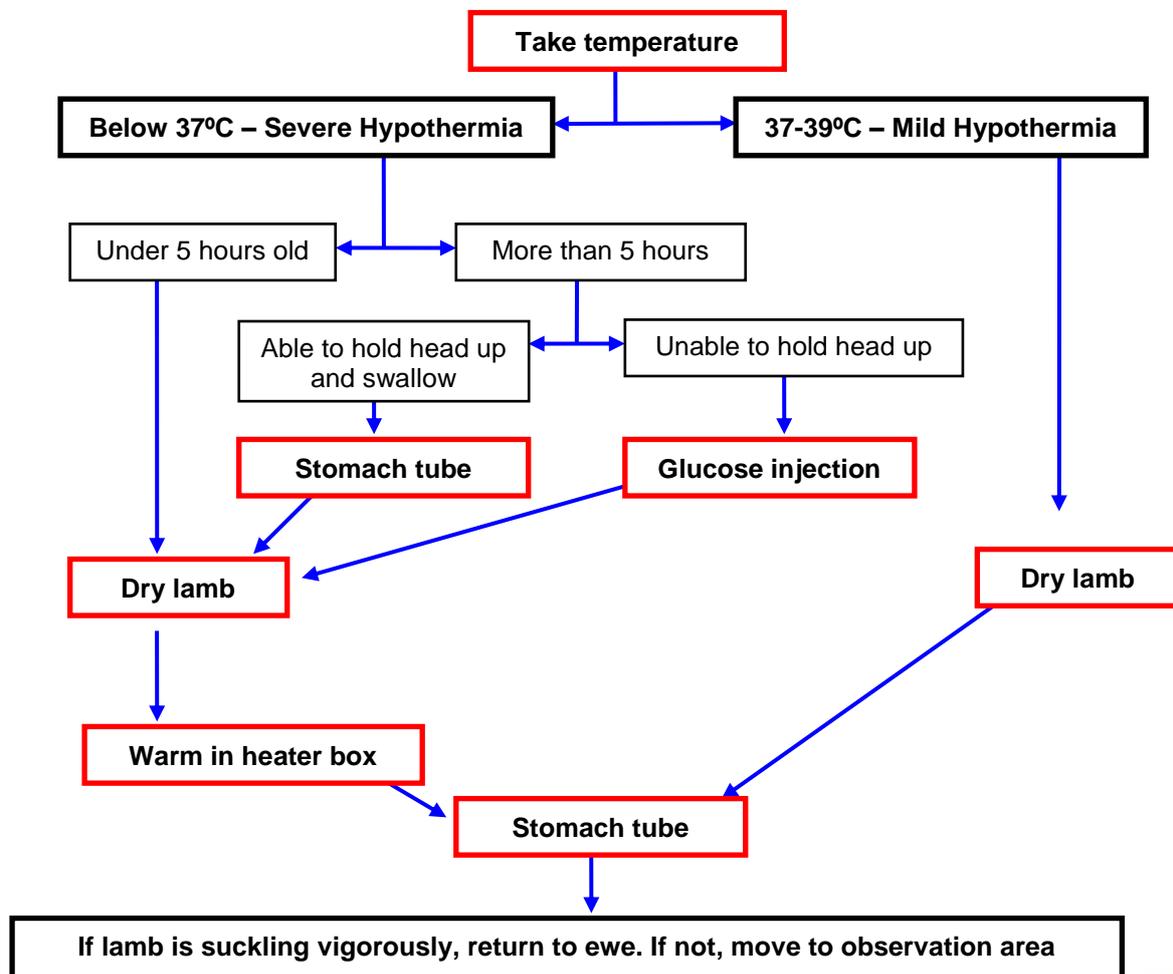
Lambs can lose body heat very rapidly and unless they are well fed will develop hypothermia, particularly if it is cold and wet. They become lethargic, tucked up, do not follow the ewe and may or may not show signs of distress. Unless treated they will quickly deteriorate and die.

Take the temperature of any lamb which shows signs of lethargy or distress, as the early hypothermia is detected, the better the lamb's chance of survival.

Lamb temperatures and what they indicate:

Above 40°C	Infection likely – call us to discuss treatment
39-40°C	Normal
37-39°C	Mild Hypothermia
Below 37°C	Severe Hypothermia

Treatment is dependent on the lamb's age and temperature – follow the flow chart below to give it the best chance of survival.



Feeding Colostrum Using a Stomach Tube

Do not use a stomach tube on very weak or unconscious lambs. Be aware of the risk of the tube entering the wind-pipe and do not feed unless certain the tube is in the correct the place.

1. Thaw frozen colostrum gradually – NOT in a microwave.
2. Warm the required amount to blood temperature taking care not to overheat it.
3. Rest the lamb on your lap and extend its neck upwards.
4. Slide the stomach tube into the side of its mouth – do not force. Softening plastic tubes in warm water will help.
5. Slowly slide the tube down until 50-75mm remains, or until resistance is felt.
6. If the lamb shows signs of distress, remove and start again.
7. When the tube is in place, attach the syringe of colostrum and slowly depress plunger – 50mls should be given over a period of 25 seconds.
8. Leave the tube in place and repeat until all colostrum is given.
9. Remove tube and syringe.
10. Wash and sterilise tube (very important!).



Guide to colostrum requirement in the newborn lamb:

Lamb size/weight	Amount per feed	Amount per 24 hours
Single 5.5kg (large)	250ml	1000ml
Twin 4.0kg (medium)	200ml	800ml
Triplet 2.5kg (small)	150ml	600ml

(Increase by 20-30 % if outdoors in cold, wet, windy conditions)

Giving Glucose Injections

Give to lambs over 5 hours old with severe hypothermia. Do not warm before injecting as this may kill them.

Meticulous hygiene when injecting is essential otherwise you run the risk of introducing infection, in which the case the lamb stands an extremely low chance of survival.



1. Dry the lamb
2. Hold the lamb by its front legs.
3. Swab the injection site with surgical spirit - you need to inject **2cm below and 1cm to the side of the navel**.
4. Draw up **10ml/kg of 20% glucose solution** (warmed to blood temperature) into a **sterile syringe** and attach a **new 1 inch 19G needle**.
5. Inject the glucose.
6. Put lamb in warmer box until its temperature reaches 38°C, after which it can be stomach tubed.

If you are not confident giving glucose injections please ask us to give you a demonstration - as giving them incorrectly may do more harm than good.