



DR. MURRAY RUNSTEDLER DR. PAUL SOSTAR DR. ANDREW MACLEOD
DR. KELLY HAELZLE DR. AMANDA TOPP DR. KELLY FISHER

Linwood Veterinary Services

1010 Industrial Cres. St. Clements, ON N0B 2M0 519-698-2610 519-699-0404
Hwy 89 Veterinary Services, 7434 Hwy 89 Mount Forest, ON N0G 2L0 519-323-9002

1-800-663-2941 Fax 519-699-2081

linwoodvet@linwoodvet.ca

We will provide industry-leading, reliable, knowledgeable service, in a friendly, courteous and timely manner, to benefit our clients and the communities we serve.

St Clements Clinic Hours: Mon-Fri 7am to 5pm Open Saturday 7am-12pm

Hwy 89 Clinic Hours: Mon-Sat 7am to 1 pm

CLINICS ARE CLOSED SUNDAY and NO DELIVERY SERVICE SATURDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Orders for Delivery: Please, call BEFORE 9:30 am, for same day local delivery Monday to Friday

24 Hour Emergency Vet Service - call 519-698-2610 519-323-9002 519-699-0404 1-800-663-2941

NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

To All Our Valued Clients:

During this pandemic, if you have had contact either directly *or indirectly* with a person who has tested positive, or is likely to have Covid-19, please inform the office before we come out. In these cases we will come out, and request that you wear a mask and maintain 6ft social distance while we are on farm. We are happy to wear masks for your protection, as well.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Notice: Zoetis Fall Draxxin® Producer Rebate

This year the producer rebate window is shorter.

Purchases of 100ml, 250 ml and 500 ml from August 10, 2020 to November 30 2020 qualify.

Submission cut of date is March 31, 2021. Call clinic for registration forms or more information.

Subclinical Milk Fever – It's Costing You

The cost of subclinical milk fever, and preventative strategies against it in dairy cattle, is a topic to review often, because it can cost a lot of money and productivity in the long run. At the clinic we've been seeing an influx in clinical milk fever cases lately, which means there are many subclinical ones we don't know about. A little background information will help to fully understand the difference between clinical and subclinical milk fever:

Clinical Milk Fever: Occurs in about 5% of dairy cattle. Cows are showing clinical signs (unsteady on feet, cold ears, down and unable to rise) and need aggressive calcium supplementation to recover properly. These cows are much more likely to have additional transition cow issues, lower milk production over their lactation and take longer to become pregnant again.

Subclinical Milk Fever: Occurs in 50% of mature cattle and 25% of first calf heifers. These animal show no clinical signs and can only be identified by measuring blood calcium levels.

Why Does Milk Fever Happen?

Milk fever happens because of the huge metabolic demand change that occurs at calving. Before calving a fetus requires an additional 8-10g of calcium per day. After calving 20 to 30g of calcium are secreted in colostrum and milk on a daily basis, in general the more milk produced the greater the calcium demand. If a cow cannot meet this huge demand change her blood calcium drops and she becomes a milk fever cow.

The Costs:

Cows with low blood calcium levels (subclinical and clinical milk fever) within one day of calving are more likely to have displaced abomasums, ketosis, fatty liver, retained placentas, metritis and mastitis in the transition cow period. These cows are also likely to have lower reproductive success.

Once case of subclinical milk fever costs approximately \$125 which is about 40% of what a clinical case of milk fever costs. This means the average dairy farm in Ontario is losing thousands of dollars to a disease you can't visually see.

How Do You Measure It?

Monitoring for subclinical milk fever is quite simple and easy to do. Taking a blood sample of cows approximately 1 day fresh and running the blood sample for calcium levels will give you an accurate idea of your incidence rate in your herd. Please talk to your Herd Veterinarian about this great monitoring tool. We have the machine in the clinic to run these samples quickly and affordably. I think you'll be surprised how common low blood calcium levels are one day post calving.

Prevention:

Luckily for us, there are many great ways to prevent subclinical and clinical cases of milk fever.

Calcium Supplementation at Calving: Giving a calcium bolus like Bovicalc at calving and repeating 12 hours later. Older, later lactation cows have shown to benefit from 4 Bovicalc boluses given 12 hours apart, starting at calving.

Dry Cow Nutritional Strategies:

- Reduce dry cow diet potassium
 - o This helps reduce the cases of clinical milk fever, doesn't help reduce subclinical milk fever as well
- Low calcium dry cow diets
 - o This can work very well, but is hard to do practically
- DCAD or Anionic Salt
 - o This is fed for 3 weeks before expected freshening
 - o Should monitor urine pH on dry cows regularly to confirm your diet is working properly

Overall, milk fever can be a costly disease but with proper dry and fresh cow management and periodic monitoring of fresh cow blood levels you can easily manage it and save yourself some money and fresh cow hassles. Nobody likes to have a down cow.

Please chat with your vet today to get started monitoring fresh cow blood levels to see if subclinical milk fever is costing you!