



Tern Vets Ltd

OCTOBER 2016

PUTTING CARE INTO PRACTICE

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Your dedicated farm
team available 24/7



Managing the transition period - can Imrestor help?

The transition period is one of the most critical periods in a dairy cows calendar. Not only does her diet change, she calves, will change group a few times, has to increase her rumen size by 40%, massively change her metabolism to quickly produce peak yields, and then get her ovaries and uterus back to normal so she can get back in calf. It is no wonder that most disease in dairy cows has a direct link from failures of transition.

The common indicators of a failed transition are:

- Milk fever
- Retained placenta
- Metritis (infection of uterus in the first few days/weeks after calving)
- Whites (pus in the uterus 3 weeks after calving)
- Mastitis in the first month of lactation
- Ketosis ("slow fever")
- Twisted stomach or "LDA"
- Excessive weight loss (>0.5 body condition score or 50kg)
- Not cycling at 6 weeks after calving



Many of the challenges of transition are made worse by a natural dip in immune function around calving - the number of neutrophils and lymphocytes (two kinds of white blood cell) reduce in the week before calving and stay low for 3 - 4 weeks after calving.



What is Imrestor?

Imrestor is not an antibiotic, a vaccine or a hormone - it is a naturally occurring cytokine - something that is normally released from white blood cells in the cow. The cytokine increases both the intensity and the duration of the immune response so helping the cow to deal with the infection risk at a time when she is vulnerable.

How do you use Imrestor?

Imrestor comes in two pre-loaded syringes which go underneath the skin, one injection is given 7 days off calving and the second injection is given within 24 hours of calving.

Is Imrestor going to sort out all transition issues?!

Imrestor is not going to solve deeper transition issues such as poor nutritional management, forage quality or stocking density issues; but alongside good cow management could help reduce mastitis levels in early lactation, and there is some evidence to say it could help reduce uterine infections too. Speak to your vet for more information.

New generation respiratory vaccine

There is a new respiratory vaccine on the market “**Hiprabovis Somni/Lkt**” that could be a useful tool in managing pneumonia in calves over the winter months. Vaccines play a key role in protecting calves against the common bugs causing pneumonia on your farm, but they cannot substitute good colostrum immunity, a clean dry bed, good ventilation, low stress levels and good nutrition.

There are lots of respiratory vaccines on the market:

- Vaccines against the common viruses (RSV, PI3, BVD, IBR)
- Vaccines against the common secondary bacterial invaders
- Combination vaccines that cover for viruses (RSV, PI3) and bacteria (*Mannheimia haemolytica*)

Somni/Lkt is a combination vaccine against two bacteria that get hold after a virus attacks - the two bacteria are *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Histophilus somni*. *Mannheimia haemolytica* is the most common bacteria causing pneumonia and causes huge amounts of inflammation in the lungs. Somni/Lkt is the only vaccine on the market that also includes *Histophilus somni* - this is a tricky bacteria to grow in the lab so it ends up underdiagnosed but can spread in the blood and show signs like *Mycoplasma* (pneumonia, ear infections and droopy ears, and it can infect the brain, joints and heart valves).



The Somni/Lkt vaccine has been recently developed and so uses a different way of processing the *Mannheimia haemolytica* bacteria than some of the more traditional vaccines, and is actually a vaccine against the toxin the bacteria produces rather than the bacteria itself - this means the immunity you get from the vaccine is able to act on the very first signs of inflammation and stops the disease faster.

We would not recommend using bacterial vaccines alone as most pneumonia cases start with an initial viral attack - so we would recommend using the Somni/Lkt vaccine **alongside** an intranasal live viral vaccine to cover against RSV and PI3 such as Risposal intranasal. This live viral vaccine can be given from 9 days old, immunity is fast to develop (5-10days after vaccination) and lasts for 12 weeks. The Somni/Lkt can then be introduced as 2 injections given 3 weeks apart to cover for the bacteria causing pneumonia and immunity lasts for 10 months.

One of the best ways to assess how well your respiratory vaccine is working on your farm is to look at how many vaccinated calves are being treated for pneumonia - vaccine alone cannot be expected to reduce treatment rates to zero if there are ventilation/housing/bedding/nutritional stressors, but you should see a significant reduction in number of treatments. Studies on Somni/Lkt show 50% reduction in clinical signs, 50% less lung damage and 5 times fewer antibiotic treatments.

Speak to your vet if you are interested to know more about the Somni/Lkt combination.

Cattle Auction

Just to remind you - Michelle is down at the Market Drayton cattle auction every Wednesday morning from 10am so feel free to pop in for a brew and a catch up!

If you would like drugs bringing down please phone the order through by 5pm on the Tuesday evening and Michelle can bring the order with her.

MILK VEIN ABSCESSSES

Just a reminder to be careful when using the milk vein for giving calcium and/or phosphorous - we had a recent milk vein abscess that burst taking the milk vein with it. Use the neck vein if possible, but if you are using the milk vein always make sure it is a clean site, use a new needle and make sure it all goes in the vein; when you have the needle in the vein, you can lower the calcium/phosphorous bottle to check you are still in, the blood should flow backwards into the see-through flutter valves.