

## Calf Scour:

### Causes:

Cause	Age
Viral: <b>Rotavirus</b> <b>Coronavirus</b>	1 to 2 weeks 1 to 2 weeks
Protozoal: <b>Cryptosporidiosis</b> <b>Coccidia</b>	1-3 weeks >3 weeks
Bacterial: <b>E.coli</b> <b>Salmonella</b>	<5 days or 2 to 3 weeks 1 to 12 weeks

\*\*\*\*Cryptosporidiosis and Salmonella are zoonotic\*\*\*\*

Rotavirus and coronavirus both cause diarrhoea in calves 1 to 2 weeks of age. Both viruses can be carried by adult cattle.

Cryptosporidiosis causes self-limiting diarrhoea, which is very easily spread.

Coccidiosis and salmonella both cause bloody diarrhoea.

- With coccidiosis calves are often seen straining with raised tail heads.
- Salmonella often causes calves to be noticeably sick.

E.coli affects very young calves and is often fatal, prompt action is needed in these cases. E.coli (O157) is also potentially zoonotic.

*With any cause of diarrhoea in calves the main causes of death are dehydration and/or electrolyte imbalance.*



## Control Factors:

- **Colostrum** intake is important in preventing calf scour:
  - ✓ Within the first 6 hours is critical
  - ✓ 10% body weight = 4-4.5L
  - ✓ Stomach tube to ensure full amount given.
  - ✓ Repeat 6 hours later
- **Hygiene** keeping calving pens and calf housing *as clean as possible*
- **Housing**
  - ✓ Keep in small batches once moved on from individual pens.
  - ✓ Adequate ventilation is important, without creating a draft
  - ✓ Hutches are often ideal as they can be moved
- **Stress** – any calf mixing or transport should be kept to a minimum and staggered with any other husbandry events.
- **Biosecurity** – Care should be taken when going from areas where adult cattle are kept into calf housing as this can spread many diseases including rotavirus, coronavirus and salmonella. *This is also very important for Johnes disease control*
- **Vaccinations** – are available for salmonella, rotavirus, corona virus and E.coli to aid in control of disease in addition to good management and husbandry practices.

*Improving colostrum intake and calf housing will also reduce the incidence of other calf diseases such as navel and joint ill*

## Treatment:

Irrespective of the cause attention must be paid to the hydration status of the calf – particularly if the eyes are sunken.

**Re-hydration** can take the form of:

- Oral fluids: discuss with your vet what is the most appropriate solution
- Intravenous Fluid Therapy: may be necessary if the calf is collapsed, weak and/or severely hydrated.



*If you are concerned at all about the state of a calf with diarrhoea please consult your vet*

It is important to **isolate** any sick calves to reduce spread of disease; placing them in a clean pen where regular monitoring is possible.