



Don't let those bugs sneak in!

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Mastitis is not a mystery disease. It occurs when bacteria get into the quarter, through the teat end. Generally when cows are out at grass, there are fewer bacteria in the environment and so the risk of new infection is lower. However, conditions this summer may have challenged this 'norm'. On many farms, cows are being housed for blocks of time, for feeding purposes. As a consequence of the hot weather, cows may also have been congregating around water troughs or in areas of shelter and so these common areas may be dirtier than normal. As a result, teats are being exposed to more dirt and bacteria than usual. This, coupled with heat stress which may lead to a lowering of the cow's defences against mastitis-causing pathogens can result in an increase in new mastitis infections.

Clean cows + Clean milker + Clean environment = less mastitis!

Reducing the number of bacteria at the teat ends reduces the risk of mastitis:

1. Milk clean cows

- a. Keep tails and udders clipped.
- b. Put cups on clean, dry teats. Teats may not be as clean as usual because of current conditions....if so, wash and dry them! Pre-milking teat disinfection with a registered product will also help reduce the bacterial load on teats.
- c. Always disinfect teats after milking-the whole teat, every cow, every milking!

2. Clean up your act!

- a. Wear clean gloves when milking.
- b. Wear clean overalls and aprons for milking.

3. Work in clean surroundings

- a. Keep the parlour clean during milking-be careful with that hose while the cows are still there, or you will create a shower of bacteria!
- b. Clean concrete yards between each milking to ensure cow standing areas are clean.
- c. If cows are being housed, even for short periods of time, don't forget to clean and lime cubicles and mats daily.

For more tips on reducing the risk of mastitis see the CellCheck Farm Guidelines for Mastitis Control, particularly Guidelines 1, 8, 27 & Management Note L.



Always milk with clean gloves



Ensure collecting yards are clean