

Fact Sheet

B

The correct way to give intra-mammary treatments

It is easy to introduce bacteria into the teat with a treatment nozzle if the teat end is not disinfected properly. Before any material is infused into a quarter, the teat end must be disinfected very carefully. Infection with environmental bacteria can cause severe mastitis.

Operators can be injured by cows during administration of intra-mammary treatments. It is important to take time and have help. More than one person is often needed to do the job well, especially if cows are not used to having their teats handled.

■ Have the following ready in the dairy:

- Disposable gloves.
- Cotton balls.
- A mixture of 70% alcohol (seven parts methylated spirits and three parts water) or teat wipes.
- Intra-mammary antibiotic tube(s). Keep the tube sterile; do not warm tubes by putting them in a bucket of warm water (this increases the chance of contamination); do not remove the tube cap until ready for use.

■ Restrain the cow so she can't move around too much.

- Sometimes this is difficult on a platform, but do what is possible.
- Another person holding the cow's tail as a 'tail jack' can be helpful.

■ Before infusing any antibiotic into a quarter, ensure the quarter is completely milked out.

■ Ensure that your hands and the teats are clean and dry.

■ **Put on disposable gloves.**

■ **Completely disinfect the end of the teats to be treated. This step is critical.**

- If you are treating more than one teat, scrub the ones furthest away first. This reduces the risk of unintentionally contaminating an already disinfected teat.
- Disinfect by vigorously scrubbing the teat opening with a cotton ball and alcohol (or teat wipes) for a minimum of 10 seconds.
- Check the cotton ball. If there is any dirty colour, repeat the scrub using a clean cotton ball until there is no more dirt seen.

■ **If you are treating more than one teat, treat the one nearest you first, followed by treatment of the more distant teats.**

■ **Insert the antibiotic tube into the teat canal.**

- Remove the cap of the tube and, without touching its tip with your hand, gently insert the nozzle into the teat canal.
- It is not necessary to insert the nozzle to its full depth – this can dilate the teat canal excessively and predispose the cow to mastitis.
- The technique of only partially inserting the nozzle into the teat canal reduces teat end damage and has been shown in some trials to reduce the incidence of new infections at calving.

■ **Infuse the contents of the syringe into the teat. Massage it up the teat into the udder.**

■ **Teat dip treated quarters with freshly made up teat dip immediately after treatment. Refer to Fact Sheet G on page 115.**

■ **Clearly mark the treated cow and treated quarter.**

■ **Record all treatments on mastitis record sheet.**

For more information about using Dry Cow Treatment, refer to Guideline 17 – Administer Dry Cow Treatment as recommended, on page 74.
