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## FRESH COWS

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The freshly calved cow has a lot on her plate - calving, adapting to a new diet, producing a high and increasing level of milk... the list goes on. One of the main problems seen post calving concerns the uterus, and the diseases metritis and endometritis.

Why are these diseases of importance?

- Reduced milk production
- Reduced feed intake, potentially leading to left displaced abomasums (LDA) etc
- Costly to treat
- Loss/culling of very sick cows
- Infertility - the effects metritis can be seen long into the lactation

Reduced fertility leads to an extended calving index, with reduced overall yield as fewer peak lactations can be achieved; not to mention the frustration and cost of trying to get a cow in calf.

What can be done to reduce this problem?

EARLY TREATMENT IS ALWAYS MORE EFFECTIVE, so:

- High risk cows - keep an extra close eye on these. Assisted calvings, retained placenta, milk fever, twinning, and dead calves all make cows more susceptible to uterine disease
- Early cases can be suspected if there is a reduction in appetite or yield, altered demeanour, raised tailhead or an elevated temperature
- Vaginal discharge - if smelly this will indicate a metritis (less than 3wks calved), or after this point, endometritis.

Treatment will depend on the individual case. Early infections tend to respond well to an injectable antibiotic such as Excenel RTU; later on an intrauterine washout such as Metricure is likely to be beneficial. Prostaglandins are also sometimes of use later on, but this will depend on what is happening on the ovaries.

Some cows may become quite sick, requiring further help with the use of fluids, anti-inflammatories etc - and last but not least, veterinary attention.