



Lameness BEFORE calving and AFTER calving

Description

Lameness is inability to stand.

There are two common conditions associated with this sign;- Alert Downer Cow Syndrome and [Milk Fever](#).



What's the difference?

Alert downer cow syndrome

- Majorly affects incalf heifers and cows. Animal unable to stand a few weeks to giving birth.
- The animal is bright, eats well and may try to rise up.
- It is as a result of low energy in the body. The animal does not respond to treatment with Calcium solution.

If left untreated for more than 14 days, the animal may experience excessive trauma that may lead to death.

PREVENTION:- Ensure that your cow is in good body condition. Simply, use one mbavu zaidi ya tatu. This will be possible through providing high energy diet for example Maizegerm 2kg/day during the dry period. Not Dairy meal.

Milk fever

- It affects cows after giving birth.
- It is as a result of low calcium in the blood.
- When you [milk](#) the cow, calcium levels decrease and may expose the cow to this disease.
- The lame cow will be listless (dull) and won't show interest to eat, it folds the neck to the body and muscles may tremble.

The animal will often respond to Calcium treatment/therapy within 30 minutes. It is however prone to decrease if the cow is milked normally. Intermittent milking is recommended i.e. milking once a day until the animal stabilizes.

PREVENTION:- Prepare your cow well for milking. This begins at the 7th month of pregnancy. Give her Dry mineral lick (one that has 5% Calcium) and Maizegerm 2kg/day. Avoid DCP (Dicalcium Phosphate). Introduce 2kgs of Dairy meal in the last 2 weeks to Calving. Maziwa mineral lick (one that has at least 20% Calcium) should be introduced in the last week prior to giving birth.

Get a detailed article on this topic, click [here](#).

Why avoid high amounts of Calcium and DCP?

Excess Calcium during the last trimester will destabilize its metabolism/use in the body of the pregnant animal making it fail to respond to Calcium provided in the diet after calving. It will also lead to overgrowth of the calf leading to difficulties in giving birth (dystocia). To prevent milk fever, do proper dry cow management and steaming up.

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