



Kirkton Veterinary Clinic

1911 Mary Street, Box 96, Kirkton, ON N0K 1K0

Phone: 519-229-8911 or 1-888-443-4184

Fax: 519-229-6823

Email: kvc@quadro.net

Website: www.kirktonvetclinic.com

Severe Mannheimia Pneumonia Outbreaks in Lactating Cows

Mannheimia haemolytica is a common bacteria which can cause pneumonia in all ages of cattle. Typically, Mannheimia pneumonia affects small groups of calves or heifers housed in wet environments with poor air quality. We also see it sporadically in lactating cows when stressed or air quality is poor. In fact, many of the classic pneumonia cases you have seen and treated on your farm are likely caused by Mannheimia. So what's the big deal?.....

Recently we have seen several severe Mannheimia pneumonia outbreaks within lactating herds that look much different from the sporadic pneumonia we usually see. These outbreaks happen quickly, **can result in sudden deaths and often require treating 25%-30% of lactating cows** with antibiotics. When an outbreak occurs, we have found it important to identify it quickly so measures can be taken to treat animals and decrease the spread of this bacteria.

What does a Mannheimia pneumonia outbreak look like?

- sudden death in 1 or more animals that looked normal 24hrs early
- very fast onset of classic pneumonia symptoms in multiple animals
 - fever >39.5C
 - fast, shallow breaths
 - decreased milk production
 - decreased feed intake
- in our experience, the first animals that become infected are the most severe

What should be done in the face of an outbreak?

- CONTACT YOUR VET ASAP to confirm an outbreak and help with treatment and vaccination plans, waiting will likely result in more deaths
- fast antibiotic treatment of affected animals
- mass vaccination of the entire herd with an intranasal vaccine to decrease spread and/or severity of those affected
- increase biosecurity measures to decrease spread between groups of animals

What can be done to help prevent an outbreak?

- this is an emerging disease, and we are still learning what triggers an outbreak
- outbreaks appear to come after a herd stressor (i.e. feed change, feed quality issues, heat stress, new introductions to the herd), sometimes this stressor is never identified
- maintain excellent air quality
- make sure both heifers and lactating cows are properly vaccinated with a MLV vaccine (i.e. Bovi-shield gold)
- limit or eliminate new introductions to your herd
- talk to your vet about adding a Mannheimia vaccine to your routine vaccination program. This vaccine can come in a combo with Bovi-shield gold.

In the last month alone, we have had outbreaks in at least 3 dairy herds in our practice. Hopefully with the cooler weather we start to see a decline in herd outbreaks. If you have any farther questions about prevention or identification of an outbreak in your herd, please talk to your herd veterinarian.