

# Summertime Heat means more Uterus Infections: How to deal if there is a shortage of oxytetracycline boluses

Dr. Jen Taylor

Some of you often use our oxytetracycline boluses to pack a uterus post-calving if an infection is present. Unfortunately, due to a backorder, we are unable to get the polyotic powder and will be running out of these boluses very soon. Here are some other ideas on how to treat these infections. (Keep in mind the tetracycline powder purchased for footwork and footbaths is much too harsh for uterine tissue, so we strongly suggest NOT to use this powder in homemade boluses)

## How to Treat:

### **Systemically:**

If the discharge has a bad odor, and infection is present, we suggest a systemic injectable antibiotic given for 3-4 days. Additionally, a shot of estrumate or lutalyse can be given 10-14 days post calving to help empty the uterus.

### **Intrauterine:**

Oxytetracycline in its liquid suspension can be infused into the uterus. Be sure to discuss the process of infusing with your veterinarian. Also, remember to follow the milk and meat withhold for this antibiotic.

Iodine can be diluted and infused into the uterus. Remember iodine is very caustic and can damage the uterus if not diluted properly. Use only a diluted lugols 2% solution, and discuss this procedure with your veterinarian.

Iodine boluses are also sold and can be packed into the uterus a few days post-calving.

Other boluses are available over the counter that do not contain antibiotics and can be used to pack the uterus as well.

## Prevention:

Obviously, preventing the infections in the first place is the best treatment option of all!

Ensure that the dry cows and fresh cows receive an adequate ration that is providing all essential vitamins, minerals, and nutrients. The immune system of the cow plays a large role in fighting off uterus infections. There are injectable vitamins and minerals that can be given around calving time if necessary.

If you must assist during a calving, be sure to properly wash the cow's vulva, as well as wear plastic sleeves to decrease the risk of contamination. If the cow doesn't clean within 6-12 hours of calving, 1-2 cc's of oxytocin can be given to assist in cleaning. Monitor your fresh cows closely. Just because the cow cleans, doesn't mean she won't get a uterus infection! And as always, please discuss your treatment protocols with your herd health veterinarian.