

Lamb Care Factsheet

Preparation for lambing (what you might need):

General: Lube (lots of it!), ropes and snares, gloves, hibiscrub (for cleaning your hands & equipment), iodine/oxytetracycline spray for navels, plenty of clean syringes & needles.

Medicines: LA penicillin – Depocillin.

LA oxytetracycline - Alamycin LA.

Calcium (20%) and Glucose

Metacam (anti-inflammatory) – good for anything that is sick – takes temperature down & helps get animal eating again.

Spectam (oral antibiotics) – discuss whether this is required with your vet.

Feeding: Spare colostrum (dried or frozen ewe/cow colostrum) and powdered milk.

Lamb stomach tube and teats for bottle feeding.



Monitoring Lambs:

4 hours old: **Navel dipped** – ideally strong iodine or thoroughly sprayed with antibiotic spray.

Check you can draw milk from both of the ewe's teats.

Does lamb look full? – if not, give 200ml of colostrum via stomach tube or bottle with teat. (A lamb should get 10% of its bodyweight in colostrum in first 12 hours. e.g. 4kg lamb requires 400ml colostrum).

Are there any signs of hypothermia? - cold, hunched up, unable to stand or have no suck reflex. Treatment advice for hypothermia overleaf.

If required give oral antibiotic (Spectam) - to prevent watery mouth.

24 hours old: **Is the navel drying up?** – if not, re-apply iodine/antibiotic spray.

Does the lamb look full? – if not provide colostrum or milk via stomach tube/teat.

Are there any signs of hypothermia? - cold, hunched up, unable to stand or have no suck reflex. Treatment advice for hypothermia overleaf.

Castrate & dock tail – As long as lambs strong and healthy.



Hypothermia

Normal temperature of a lamb is **38.5-40°C**. Hypothermia (low body temperature) is a common cause of lamb death. Hypothermia is caused by excessive heat loss; lambs can survive in cold temperatures but lose huge amounts of heat if they are wet or in drafts. Starvation, leading to low glucose levels will leave lambs unable to produce heat and at risk of hypothermia.



If lamb looks unwell or will not suckle take its temperature:

37-38.5°C - Mild-Moderate hypothermia

- Feed lamb with warm colostrum/milk via a teat or stomach tube.
- Dry lamb thoroughly before returning to mother (ensure this is a dry and draught free pen).
- Observe carefully after ½ hour to ensure lamb is responding. If not supply extra heat.

Less than 37°C - Severe hypothermia: In the worse cases the lamb will be comatosed but don't give up, with some effort it is possible to save lambs even at this stage.

If less than 5 hours old.	If more than 5 hours old.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry thoroughly • Warm carefully to 37°C • Feed warm colostrum via stomach tube • Warm to 39°C • Return to mother (ensure this is a dry and draught free pen) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inject intraperitoneal glucose 20% at a rate of 5-10ml/kg (i.e. 40ml for an average sized lamb) • Dry thoroughly • Warm carefully to 37°C • Feed warm colostrum via stomach tube • Warm to 39°C • Return to mother (ensure this is a dry and draught free pen)

Intraperitoneal injection:

Glucose is normally at a concentration of 40% this should be diluted to 20% with boiled water and administered warm. E.g. 4kg lamb getting 10ml/kg would require 40ml (20ml glucose & 20ml of water).

Hold the lamb suspended by its forelimbs, with its back against your body. Use a 19 gauge 1 inch needle, insert the needle approximately one inch to the side and one inch lower than the umbilicus, pointing the needle in the direction of the lambs pelvis. Slowly inject glucose solution.



For videos on how to do a peritoneal injection, castrate lambs and much more please go to:

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/livestock/how-to-videos/>