

Clostridial Diseases (5 in 1).

Clostridia are bacteria that are widely distributed in the environment and in the gut of most animals. These bacteria are spread in the faeces of carrier animals and in the soil. Clostridia contaminate a host and cause disease by one or more of the following methods.

- i. Spores of some clostridial species cross the gut wall into the blood of the animal and are carried to the muscles, liver and spleen. Here they lie dormant until a trigger, such as bruising or trauma, creates an ideal environment for them to germinate in e.g. Blackleg.
- ii. Some clostridial species remain predominantly in the gut where they proliferate in response to trauma or sudden changes in diets - as in the case of grain overload.
- iii. Some species, most commonly *C. tetani* - the cause of tetanus, cause disease by direct contamination of wounds with soil or faeces.

Risk factors for clostridial disease and sudden death cannot really be avoided in modern farming systems. Young animals with limited immunity, intensive grazing, yarding, transport and rapid spring pasture growth are all contributing factors. The best way of avoiding clostridial disease is with a 5 in 1 vaccination. Two shots 4 weeks apart will normally protect an animal for life. Injections can be given from 4 weeks of age.