

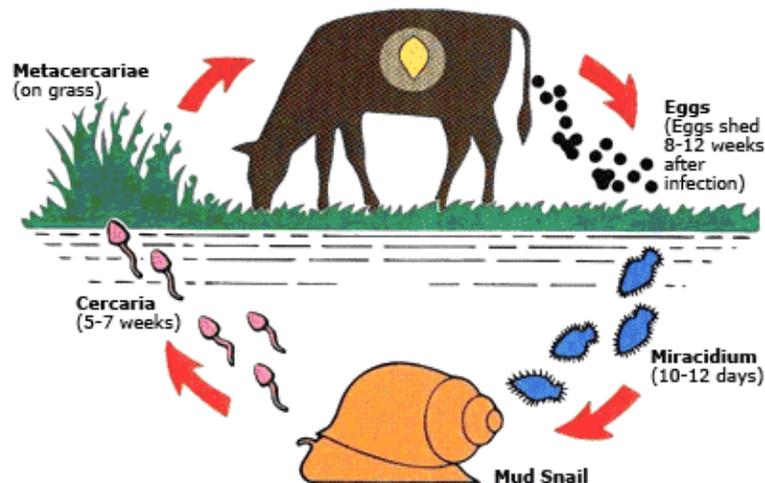
FLUKE INFECTION

(Fasciolosis)

LIVER FLUKE (FASCIOLA HEPATICA) CAN CAUSE:

- CHRONIC DISEASE - AN IMPORTANT THOUGH RARELY FATAL CONDITION COMMONLY SEEN IN CATTLE.
- SUB-ACUTE/ACUTE DISEASE AND OFTEN FATAL DISEASE PRIMARILY SEEN IN SHEEP.
- ACT AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN 'BLACK DISEASE', AGAIN MOST COMMONLY SEEN IN SHEEP.

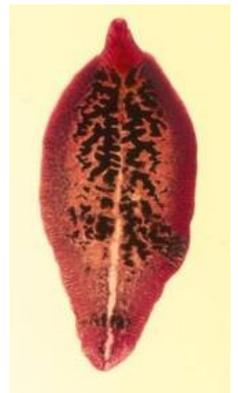
THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE FLUKE IS SHOWN BELOW AND IS HEAVILY RELIANT ON THE CORRECT ENVIRONMENT FOR SURVIVAL OF THE INTERMEDIATE HOST- A MUD SNAIL. CLASSICALLY WETLANDS AND MARSHY AREAS PROVIDE AN IDEAL HABITAT FOR THE SNAIL.



THE FLUKE CAUSES DISEASE BY MIGRATING THROUGH THE BILE DUCTS IN THE LIVER, CAUSING THICKENING AND INFLAMMATION OF THE DUCTS AND DAMAGE TO THE LIVER TISSUE. FLUKE CAN ALSO MIGRATE TO OTHER SITES AND CAUSE DAMAGE E.G. THE LUNGS.

Clinical signs of infection

- LOSS OF CONDITION, MILK DROP, REDUCED FERTILITY, DEPRESSED APPETITE, LEADING TO POOR WEIGHT, GAIN IN YOUNG STOCK, BOTTLE JAW- A FIRM SWELLING, BETWEEN OR BELOW THE LOWER JAWS. ALL AGES OF CATTLE CAN BE AFFECTED AND INCIDENCE IS WORSE DURING THE WINTER MONTHS. UP TO 40% OF CATTLE SLAUGHTERED HAVE THE LIVER CONDEMNED DUE TO LIVER FLUKE.



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(FASCIOSIS)

TREATMENT and PREVENTION



DAMAGE BY FLUKE HAS CAUSED THE BILE DUCTS (CREAM AREAS) TO THICKEN AND CALCIFY PREVENTING NORMAL FUNCTION. FLUKE CAN ALSO RESULT IN ANEMIA- A MODERATE NUMBER (100-200) CAN CAUSE CATTLE TO LOSE UP TO HALF A LITRE OF BLOOD PER WEEK!

Treatment

TESTING FOR THE PRESENCE OF FLUKE IN THE HERD USING BULK MILK SAMPLES, INDIVIDUAL BLOOD SAMPLES AND FAECAL SAMPLES WILL IDENTIFY A PROBLEM AND TREATMENT CAN THEN BE PLANNED WITH YOUR VET.

AN APPROPRIATE TREATMENT REGIME SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO LIMIT FLUKE EGG OUTPUT ONTO THE PASTURE. THE DRUG USED MUST TARGET FLUKE - MOST WORMERS ARE NOT EFFECTIVE AGAINST FLUKE AND NOT ALL ANTI-FLUKE DRUGS TARGET ALL STAGES OF THE FLUKE LIFECYCLE. WITHDRAWAL PERIODS SHOULD BE NOTED AS THEY CAN BE QUITE LONG.

Prevention

IDEALLY LIVESTOCK SHOULD BE KEPT AWAY FROM MARSHY AREAS, OR THE DRAINAGE IMPROVED. OFTEN THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE AND ROUTINE FLUKE TREATMENTS WILL BE NECESSARY TO CONTROL THE INFECTION AND LIMIT THE NUMBER OF EGGS AND LARVAE ON THE PASTURE. A PLAN TO PREVENT FLUKE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH YOUR VET AND INCLUDED IN YOUR HERD HEALTH PLAN.



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