

application of bedding conditioners such as hydrated lime, are effective at reducing the bacterial load in the bedding. However, the activity of these products are short lived, and thus, frequent application is required. It is recommended that 2 lb be applied per stall and it must be applied every other day.

The use of blanket **dry cow therapy** with a long-lasting antibiotic preparation is an effective way to cure existing infections at drying off. Furthermore, studies report the use of an **internal teat sealant** will significantly reduce the new IMI (acquired during the dry period) caused by environmental streptococci, which includes *S. uberis*. The use of an internal teat sealant, in conjunction with blanket dry cow therapy, will double the cost of dry cow treatment. However, in herds where environmental streptococci are the predominant bacteria isolated from clinical mastitis, this is an effective way to prevent new infections and cure existing infections during the dry period.

When are *S. uberis* infections most likely to occur?

New infections can occur at any time during lactation and may also occur during the dry period. However, the risk for new infection with *S. uberis* has been reported **greatest during the early dry period**. Following milk cessation, cows do not experience the daily flushing of the gland and are at an increased risk for mastitis in the early dry period. Cows in **early lactation** are also at an increased risk for new infections due to the increased stress and immune suppression associated with the postpartum period. Cows with high milk production are not at greater risk than cows with low milk production.

How likely are *S. uberis* infections to cure?

These infections are often difficult to cure with traditional intramammary antibiotic preparations. Some veterinarians have had greater success with systemic administration of penicillin. However, veterinary consultation is recommended prior to the start of any treatment protocol. Due to the nature of these bacteria, **emphasis needs to be placed on prevention** of these infections, rather than a focus on treatment.

Quick Notes

- *S. uberis* is an environmental organism, found commonly in manure and bedding
- New infections are most likely to occur during the early dry period
- It is imperative to keep bedding clean and dry
- Use of washed sand bedding that is properly dried will help reduce the environmental load of *S. uberis*
- Proper milking procedures, including pre and post dip application are extremely important in the prevention of these infections

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