

## Lungworm in calves

Lungworm disease is due to invasion of the respiratory tract by the worm *Dictyocaulus viviparus*, which may lead to bronchitis and pneumonia. Infection with *D. viviparus* occurs primarily in calves younger than 10 months of age but sometimes older cattle are affected.



Dairy calves are most vulnerable to lungworm disease, as they are often placed on paddocks grazed each year by successive groups of calves.

Affected calves are usually bright and alert and continue to eat but lose condition rapidly. The calves may breathe more rapidly and often have sudden attacks of coughing.

Severely affected calves may breathe with their mouth open, extend their head and neck and stick out their tongue each time they try to cough. Secondary bacterial infections are common.

Treatment of affected calves generally involves drenching them as well as giving them anti-inflammatory drug (Metacam or ketoprofen) and an antibiotic to prevent secondary bacterial infections.

Lungworm is best prevented by ensuring all calves are drenched appropriately.