

Ringworm (Dermatophytosis) in Cattle



A fungal agent is responsible for Ringworm in cattle. The fungal species most commonly responsible for Ringworm in cattle is *Trichophyton verrucosum*. The fungal spores are spread between cattle by direct contact with an infected animal or through indirect contact such as sharing brushes etc between animals. The spores grow rapidly in warm, humid conditions.

Typical ringworm lesions are thick well-circumscribed, grey-whitish plaques of 2-6 cm in diameter which are raised above the skin surface. Lesions are seen usually around the eyes, neck and perineum.

The incubation period is 1-4 weeks and in most instances the disease is self-limiting. Affected animals develop immunity to ringworm after a period of time (1-4 months), followed by spontaneous recovery.

Diagnosis is usually made on clinical signs, however for a definitive diagnosis, skin scrapings of hair and skin (especially from the margins of the ringworm lesion) can be carried out.

Treatment is not usually required due to the self-limiting nature of the disease; therefore, treatment is usually for cosmetic reasons only. Washing of hardened crusty lesions with 5% iodine solution can be performed.

Isolation of affected animals is useful to minimise spread in the herd.

Ringworm is a zoonotic disease, which means it is a disease that humans can contract from affected animals. Therefore, it is recommended to avoid touching the ringworm lesions and practicing good hygiene when working with affected animals.