Ringworm in Cattle

Ringworm is one of the most common infectious skin diseases in cattle. Although it is unpleasant it poses little impact on growth or wellbeing of cattle and therefore should cause little economic impact. It is caused primarily by a spore forming fungus called *Trichophyton verrucosum*. It is highly infectious and can spread rapidly through a group.

Cattle of any age can be affected but most commonly it is seen in groups of housed youngstock. It may be more severe in poorly growing animals and can often be an indicator of underlying poor health or disease that needs investigating. It is also important to note it is readily transmitted to humans (zoonotic).

**What to look for**
- Grey circular hairless lesions – may be raised and crusty
- Initially start as single lesions but can rapidly spread, overlap and affect large areas
- Variable in size.

**Where to look**
- Young cattle: face, eyes, ears and back
- Adult cattle: chest and legs.

**Transmission**
- From direct contact with infected animals
- From contact with contaminated equipment or environment.

**How to prevent it**
- Rapid identification of infected animals
- Isolate infected individuals if possible
- Decontaminate the environment effectively after movement
- Reduce stocking density and contact with infected animals
- Check incoming stock for any signs of lesions.

**How to treat**
Ringworm is self-limiting and should resolve spontaneously, but can take up to nine months. Small areas do not generally require treatment.

Animals with very large lesions may benefit from additional treatment but this is best discussed with a vet.

Animals that are also poorly grown, have very extensive lesions or are slow to recover, should be examined by a vet because they may have other underlying disease (e.g. BVD). The spores produced by the fungus can survive in a dry environment for many years and remain infectious. Therefore it is important to thoroughly clean and disinfect the shed after an infected group. Steam cleaning is most effective.

**How to avoid becoming infected**
- Wear gloves when treating infected individuals
- Wash thoroughly after contact with infected animals.

---

**Here to help**

**Opening hours**

Mon-Fri
9am - 5pm

24 hour emergency cover

**Get in touch**

Call us on
01934 852650

Email us
farmpractice@langfordvets.co.uk

www.langfordvets.co.uk

Langford Veterinary Services Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Bristol