

Selenium deficiency

Selenium is an antioxidant and if levels are low it causes damage to tissue and cell linings. This leads to White Muscle Disease and a lowered immunity. Consequences of lowered immunity include:

- ▣ Increased susceptibility to worm infestations, despite treatment
- ▣ Reduce response to vaccination
- ▣ Poor fertility
- ▣ Effects on metabolism, leading to ill-thrift

White muscle disease can be seen in new born lambs which are weak, stiff and reluctant to move. Older lambs can show respiratory distress, reluctance to move and can collapse when driven.

To manage this problem, supplementation is recommended by way of oral drenches or even better, boluses (i.e. *Cosecure*). An injectable form of Selenium is available '*Vitesel*', which can be used to treat clinical cases and lambs taking a long time to get to their feet.