



Herd Health Bulletin

High Somatic Cell Count Strategies- Part II

Selecting a Therapy

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Selecting a therapy for reducing HSCC should be predicated on completing the previously discussed checklist. Then consider the scope and severity of the HSCC. Is it a few cows or the whole herd? How high is the somatic cell count, or how bad is the problem? Here again, there are different layers of prevention and therapy with corresponding treatment costs. The earlier you catch the problem the better because the use of preventatives is always the less expensive option.

Individual Cow or Small Group Therapy Options

A) Low to Moderate HSCC

This cow has no clinical mastitis or has only a few flakes showing up in the milk and you sense that you are ahead of the problem. Cows in the first 2 to 3 weeks postpartum fall into this category also for preventative therapy.

- Feed Crystal Aloe Pellets, 4-8 oz./hd/day for 3 to 7 days.
- Put some Veterinary Dairy Liniment on the udder if edema or discharge in the milk is evident.

B) Moderate HSCC

These cows have a significant challenge to their immune system and possibly to their udder.

- Feed Crystal Aloe Pellets, 4 to 12 oz./hd/day for 7 to 10 days.
- Put Veterinary Dairy Liniment onto the outside of the udder if needed.
- Administer 30cc of Crystal Whey once a day for 3 days in a row and then once again on day 10.
- Orally administer 2 Super Boost Capsules am and pm for one day and continue this if necessary (bolus can be opened and mixed into the feed), or use Antioxidant Blend Tincture in the vulva.

C) High Somatic Cell Count and/or Systemic Mastitis

This cow is in real trouble and is in a fight for her life. She may have a systemic mastitis or she may show no signs of mastitis at all, but still has a very high somatic cell count.

- Feed 16 to 24 oz. of Crystal Aloe Pellets until condition improves and then maintain 4 to 6 oz./hd/day for an additional 7 days.
- Administer 30cc of Crystal Whey once a day for three consecutive days and then once again on day 10.
- Apply Veterinary Dairy Liniment onto the outside of the udder to reduce edema and improve circulation.
- Administer Dr. Paul's Garlic Tincture, 2 to 3cc into the vulva, 2-3 times per day.
- Orally administer 2 Super Boost Capsules, twice a day until condition is under control or use Antioxidant Blend Tincture in the vulva.
- If after two days no debris comes out of the quarter, an application of Soft-Oil to the udder may be necessary after several milkings or strippings.
- Using other supportives if desired is ok, i.e. homeopathy.
- Use Keto-Care or Super Boost Capsules on these cows to maintain appetite and digestive function so that other complications do not develop.

- Strip, strip, strip, strip. Help her clean out!

Sometimes a cow will respond to this therapy, only to relapse with mastitis or a HSCC in 10 to 21 days. It is very possible that many of these cows have exhausted their critical nutrient reserves in the body tissues and the immune system becomes dysfunctional; it has run out of the necessary fuel to operate on. Feeding Dairy Glow to this cow would be very helpful to build up her tissue reserves and support immune function. Start with 4 oz./hd/day for 7 to 10 days and then feed 2 oz./hd/day throughout the lactation for continued support.

Whole Herd Therapy and/or Prevention for HSCC

There are two concepts to consider when addressing whole herd prevention or therapy for HSCC. The first concept is whole herd short-term therapy/prevention and the second is long-term whole herd therapy/prevention.

A) Short-term, Whole herd Therapy/Prevention

Many of Crystal Creek's clients have found that feeding 4 to 8 oz./hd/day of Crystal Aloe Pellets for 2 to 3 weeks post partum, helps reduce the incidence of mastitis, HSCC, uterine infections and helps the cows to get on feed better. Since the cortisol levels are higher in cows for two weeks prepartum and also for 2 to 3 weeks postpartum, it is logical that the cows would respond well to having Crystal Aloe Pellets in the diet during these high stress periods. Especially, key high production cows, or cows that are considered vulnerable, high-risk situations, are targeted with Crystal Aloe therapy.

B) Long-term, Whole Herd Therapy/Prevention

Many producers have a growing awareness that there is a direct link between healthy, balanced soil and healthy nutrient rich forages. In turn the nutrient density of the forage has a direct impact on health and performance of the cow and its immune system. Many soils today are depleted and unbalanced and are growing anemic, nutrient poor forages. This is having a direct negative affect on herd health. Until soils and forages can be repaired (which may take many years), there is great merit to feeding Dairy Glow in the ration as a supplement to the whole ration, for the dry cows and for the heifers.

Dairy Glow has a very good label for reducing HSCC under the right conditions (see previous checklist) and supporting immune function. Dairy Glow contributes high levels of available nutrients that are essential for good immune function. Dairy Glow also supports good digestive efficiency so that the cow can get the most nutrition out of the ration she eats, so tissue reserves can be built up and the immune system will be well supplied with components necessary for a strong immune system.

Culturing Tough HSCC Cases

Because the strategies described here are focused on supporting the cows own immune system, rather than killing bugs, there is not much of a need to culture before therapy. However, if the cows do not respond to these strategies, or if there is a history of serious infections with Staphylococcus aureus, mycoplasma or Streptococcus agalactiae, it would be good to culture first and see if this is what you are up against. These therapies have had some 'limited success' in dealing with staph aureus and strep ag, so it is good to know if this is the problem before a therapy is applied, allowing for the proper management technique and expectations from the start. If the cows have mycoplasma, the above strategies are very limited.

There are many factors affecting high somatic cell counts, but good tools and strategies are available when properly applied.