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# Rhodes Vet Clinic

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**Newsletter**

## Calicivirus

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Rabbit vaccination for Calicivirus has been in the news recently.

There are a number of different strains of Calicivirus (Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus- RHDV) strains present in Australia. RHDV1 is the original strain released in 1995. RHDV1 K5 is planned for release in 2017. RHDV2 was not released however it was first detected in 2015 in Australia and has recently been confirmed as cause of death in pet rabbits in the local area.

The current vaccine is quite effective against the original strain (RHDV1) and recent studies are showing the vaccine is partially effective against the strain that is planned for release (RHDV1 K5). However, rabbits are unlikely to be adequately protected from RHDV2 with the current vaccine. The strain has spread rapidly in Europe aided by its ability to infect rabbits that are vaccinated or immune to RHDV1 strains and its ability to infect younger rabbits.

In May 2015 RHDV2 was found in wild rabbits in the ACT and has since been detected across NSW, SA and VIC (including locally). RHDV2 can cause death in rabbit kittens as young as 3-4 weeks and vaccinated adults. The currently available vaccine is not fully protective against disease from RHDV2. While a new vaccine is being developed there is a revised vaccination protocol recommended by the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA). This is designed to offer adequate protection against RHDV1 & RHDV1 K5 and hopefully partial but unproven protection from RHDV2.

The AVA vaccine recommendation:

Rabbit Kittens: 4, 8, 12 weeks of age, then every 6 months

Adults: 2 vaccinations one month apart, then every 6 months.

This protocol is Off-label. The Cylap vaccine is not registered for use against RHDV2 or for 6 monthly use.

Given the unproven protection against RHDV2 even with this enhanced protocol it is necessary to use strict biosecurity to protect animals against all strains of the Calicivirus.

- Prevent direct and indirect contact between domestic and wild rabbits
- Avoid cutting grass and feeding it to rabbits if there is a risk of contamination from wild rabbits
- Wash hands with warm soapy water between handling rabbits
- Good insect control to reduce risk of both Calicivirus and Myxomatosis. Insect proofing the hutch or keeping rabbits indoors is recommended.
- Infected rabbits should be isolated and disposed of in a manner to minimise environmental contamination
- All cages and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with bleach.

### We provide:

- Surgery & Medicine for small and large animals
- Herd Health Advice
- Soft Tissue & Orthopaedic Surgery
- Dentistry
- Digital X-ray
- Ultrasound
- In House Blood Testing
- Nutrition
- Prescription Diets
- Microchip Identification

### Simpson Office:

Our Simpson Office is open  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
10am to 3pm  
P: 03 5594 3257

### Colac Office:

Our Colac Office is open  
Monday to Friday  
8am to 6pm  
Saturday 9am to 12 noon  
[www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au](http://www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au)

**We are available 24/7  
for emergencies.  
Our emergency number  
is:  
5232 2111**

# Pneumonia

This a word that everyone knows and hears every day.

It is inflammation of the lung. It can be caused by all of the following :

- Bacteria
- Virus
- Fungi
- Parasites
- Non-infectious (allergy, aspiration)



In this newsletter we are looking at a BACTERIA which causes a severe respiratory infection. It is called Pasteurellosis and the bacteria has a name, Pasteurella haemolytica.

We see it most severely in calves, particularly when there is a large number confined to a small area. All age groups can be affected. It is important to note that STRESS is a major causative factor. This stress can be due to shipping/transporting cattle. We see it in summer due to heat stress, lack of water, lack of shade, feeding close together i.e. hay rings etc. The recent dramatic fluctuations in temperature cause stock to become heat stressed at far lower temperatures than normal as they have not had the time to adapt.

Transmission from one to the other is by coughing and direct contact. It is highly infectious and so spreads quickly.

Signs of the disease can be sudden death without any previous signs. The standard quote from our farmers “oh I just found the animal dead in the paddock, it was fine yesterday”.

If you get a diagnosis quickly then treatment using a wide range of antibiotics will fix the problem over 4-7 days.

Please remember that pasteurella does not only like to affect cattle but also pigs, goats and sheep.

This is a common cause of summer pneumonias.



## FOOTY TIPPING—LAST CHANCE TO JOIN IN THE FUN!!!

Join us in our weekly tipping competition for the AFL season which begins this month!

Tips must be either emailed ([cindy@rhodesvet.com.au](mailto:cindy@rhodesvet.com.au)), faxed (5231 5892) or delivered to the clinic by 5pm on the day of the first game of each round. Tips will not be accepted by telephone.

If tips are not received by the closing time you will receive the week's lowest tipping result less one point.

We will accept several entries from each house if more than one person wishes to participate .... just ensure the tips are named.

The leader board will be emailed out to participants weekly.

Please advise us before Monday 20th March if you wish to join in.  
There is a small cost of \$1/round or \$23 for the season.

As per other seasons we will have a small get together at the end of the season to present the winning tippers with their rewards