

Sustainable Control of Parasites in Sheep

Have you got all the facts
you need to protect your
flock from sheep scab?



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Important Facts About Sheep Scab



Sheep to sheep contact is the main source of disease spread, but contaminated trailers and lorries are also a risk.



The mites can live in wool tags for up to 16 days making rubbing areas a source of infection to other sheep.



Shearing, scanning or other shared equipment, including greasy overalls and moccasins can also spread the mites.



It can take several months before any clinical signs are seen, by which time up to 60% of the flock can be infested.

You cannot tell by looking - use quarantine and the blood test to decide if you need to treat.



Sheep scab is an allergic reaction by the sheep to the faeces of scab mites as they feed on the surface of the skin.



The ELISA blood test can tell if sheep are infected with sheep scab from as early as two weeks after they pick up mites.



The life cycle of the mite is 14 days and the population of mites doubles every 6 days

Diagnosis Of Sheep Scab

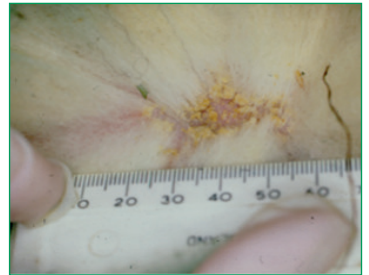
Using medicines such as wormers or injectables simply as insurance or 'just in case' not only leads to problems with resistance but it is also expensive and often doesn't provide the control we need.

Sheep scab is no exception. Itching and wool loss in sheep can be due to a number of things other than scab mites, for example lice or a dermatitis. To make sure that we treat effectively we must have a diagnosis.

There are two ways your Vet can diagnose sheep scab: Skin Scraping & Blood Test

Skin Scrapes

Skin scrapes allow us to collect mites from the skin surface of the sheep. This is the quickest way to obtain a diagnosis when sheep are clinically affected as the mites can easily be collected from the edge of lesions. In the early stages it can be difficult to find mites, even if they are present. This method cannot be used to identify animals which are infected but not yet displaying any clinical signs.



Sheep Scab Blood ELISA test

The sheep scab blood ELISA test allows us to detect antibodies which the sheep produces in response to infestation. These antibodies are only produced following sheep scab infection and can be detected as quickly as two weeks following exposure - long before clinical signs appear.



Treatments For Sheep Scab

There are just two types of treatment available for sheep scab: An organophosphorus (OP) plunge dip or an endectocide (injectable group 3-ML).



Active Ingredient	Product Names	Application Method	Protection Period for Sheep Scab	Withdrawal Period (Days)	Other Ecto Parasites Treated/ Warnings
Diazinon	Gold Fleece*	Plunge dip	At least 60 days	49	Lice, ticks, blowfly, keds
Ivermectin (Injections)	Ivomec Classic Molemec Noromectin Multi Panomec Paramectin Multi Premadex	Subcutaneous. Two injections required to treat sheep scab (7 days apart)	None. Treatment only [#]	37 or 42 (check individual product)	Nasal bots
Doramectin (Injection)	Dectomax	Intramuscular	None. Treatment only [#]	70	Nasal bots
Moxidectin 1% (Injection)	Cydectin 1% Zermex 1%	Subcutaneous. Two injections 10 days apart required to treat sheep scab	28 days	70	Nasal bots <i>This product should not be used in sheep that have had footrot vaccine</i>
Moxidectin 2% (Injection)	Cydectin 20mg/ml Zermex 20mg/ml	Subcutaneous at base of the ear	60 days	104	Nasal bots

[#] Clean pasture and segregation from untreated sheep post treatment required.

Recently there have been confirmed reports of resistance in scab mites to the injectables so we now need to be very careful how we use these medicines, in particular making sure that scab is present before using them. The good news is that we know effective plunge dipping in an OP will kill mites resistant to the endectocides.

*** Remember OPs must only be used as a plunge dip. They are not effective if used in a shower or a jetter and must not be used in this way.**