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Mazingira Centre

Hygienic Milking Practices to Prevent Mastitis

Six Key Steps for Healthy Cows

Wash hands with clean water and soap

Hands carry germs; washing removes them before milking.



Squirt milk into strip-cup and check for abnormalities

Stripping 2–3 streams from each teat into a strip-cup detects mastitis early and helps milk let-down.



Use clean individual cloth per cow

Use a clean cloth for each cow and milking. Fold in quarters, using a different fold for each teat.
Wipe upward from tip.
Wash thoroughly after use.





Wear clean gloves

Gloves protect cows and hands, and help prevent touching your face or dirty surfaces while milking.
If unavailable, wash hands thoroughly.



Dip each teat into germ killing liquid before milking

Dip teats in disinfectant before milking for 30 seconds, then wipe dry with a clean cloth.
Use a dip cup or spray.
Ask your vet about the right dilution to use.



Dip each teat into germ killing liquid after milking

After milking, the teat opening stays open and germs can enter. Dip teats with disinfectant after milking. Discard used dip solution, never reuse.

The Must Milking Order

1

Healthy cows: no mastitis, good CMT

Milk these first with clean hands and equipment to prevent spreading infection.

2

Suspected cows: CMT Trace or weak positive

Milk these after healthy cows. Monitor them closely.

3

Mastitis cows: Distinct positive & strong positive

Always milk these **last**
Wash and sanitize hands and equipment.

Additional Eight Hygiene Tips

- Milk cows at the **same** time every day.
- Keep the milking area and shed clean and dry.
- Make cows stand for at least 30 minutes after milking.
- When milking, do healthy quarters first and the infected quarter last.
- Avoid touching an infected teat and then a healthy one.
- **Do not** wet teats with plain water before milking.
- Replace teat dip solution every day.
- Wash containers with clean soap and water, then rinse with hot water.



Five Golden Rules to Stop Mastitis

- **Test regularly with CMT**: to catch hidden mastitis.
- **Milk clean**: wash hands, wear gloves, use pre- and post-dip, individual cloths.
- **Act fast**: call the vet if mastitis is found.
- **Record all:** tests, treatments, and withdrawal dates.
- **Prevent:** keep sheds clean, feed well, follow milking order, use dry-cow treatment.

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