



Veterinary
Laboratories
Agency®

Caseous lymphadenitis (CLA)



***Caseous lymphadenitis (CLA)* is a disease of sheep and goats and a problem in the major sheep-producing areas of the world.**

It is due to a bacterium called *Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis* which causes abscess formation in the lymph nodes, usually of the head and neck, but sometimes internally. It is a problem mainly in terminal sire flocks and milking goat herds - also increasingly in commercial sheep flocks. It rarely infects humans.

Continued

Please contact your nearest VLA regional laboratory for advice on tests and services available. Contact details can be found on the VLA website.

Contact details

VLA, Weybridge,
New Haw, Addlestone,
Surrey, KT15 3NB
United Kingdom

Tel: 01932 341111
Fax: 01932 347046
E mail: enquiries@vla.defra.gsi.gov.uk
Web: www.vla.gov.uk

● Why should I be worried about it?

Once introduced into a flock, it is difficult to control and (almost) impossible to eliminate. The abscesses heal but it is likely that the animal remains infected for life even if treated with antibiotics.

There are no licensed vaccines in UK.

If you are selling breeding stock, the major economic loss due to CLA will be in lost sales. Deaths due to CLA are unusual but there are also losses at meat inspection due to carcass rejections and trimming.

A blood test is available to screen for antibodies and is used to monitor sheep prior to sale in the CLA Monitoring Scheme run by Scottish Agricultural College. This test is recommended for screening groups of sheep intended for sale in tandem with clinical examination of the individuals. It can be used to test individual animals with typical lesions, for example where culture is inconclusive, although a negative result should be treated with caution.

● Prevention

- ◆ Only buy in animals if essential. Animals from an infected flock/herd may not show external signs of disease
- ◆ Buy sheep that have been monitored for the disease.
- ◆ It may sometimes be possible to obtain an assurance from vendors that CLA has not been diagnosed in their flock and that suspect cases have been investigated.
- ◆ Quarantine bought-in animals for at least 4 weeks and examine them carefully for any lumps or scars, particularly in the head and neck region before introduction. This does not guarantee that the animal is not infected.
- ◆ If using contractors for shearing or dipping, ensure protective clothing and equipment are clean and disinfected.

Contact your veterinary practitioner for further advice.