

# TOP FARMERS KNOW-HOW PREVENT MASTITIS DURING LACTATION



Perfecting the milking routine is the key to mastitis management after calving. The aim of milking is to remove milk efficiently from the udder, so that:

- Cows are not stressed
- Teat ends remain undamaged
- Mastitis-causing bacteria are not introduced into teat ends

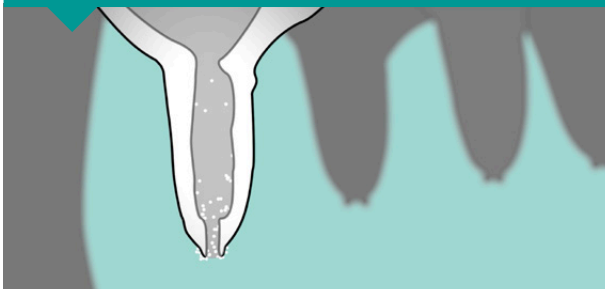
## TO MINIMISE COW STRESS:

- Don't push cows with bikes and backing gates
- Allow cows to move to/from/into the shed at their own pace

## TO LOOK AFTER TEAT ENDS:

- Remove cups with gravity (by cutting off the vacuum before retracting the cups), not with force
- Monitor teat end condition — if teats appear rough or damaged the vacuum may be too high or the cups may be staying on too long. Adjust the milking routine to minimise overmilking. Overmilking is more likely to cause mastitis than undermilking
- Change cup liners every 2,500 cow-milkings — online calculators are available to help set a date

### DAMAGED TEAT END



## TO MINIMISE MASTITIS-CAUSING BACTERIA ENTERING TEAT ENDS:

- Only apply cups to clean, dry teats.
- Wipe dirty teats with a dry paper towel
- Keep tracks and yards well-maintained and clean
- Wear gloves when milking
- Clean/change your gloves if they become dirty or covered with milk
- Cup cows up in a calm and consistent manner and minimise air entry into the milk line
- Teat spray effectively after every milking
  - mix teat spray using clean water, every 2-3 days, following label instructions
  - use adequate volume (20-30mL/cow)
  - ensure complete coverage of all teats on every cow

## MONITOR MASTITIS TO MANAGE IT PROACTIVELY:

- Bulk milk somatic cell count (BMSCC)
  - Aim for <150,000 cells/mL
  - Sudden spike might mean a clinical case has entered the vat — strip the herd to find clinical cow(s)
  - Gradual increase could indicate a contagious mastitis problem is developing — herd test or RMT to find subclinical cows
- Clinical case records
  - >1 case/100 cows/month after calving = get your vet or milk quality expert involved

FOR MORE:

Visit [TopFarmers.co.nz](https://www.TopFarmers.co.nz)

Or find us on YouTube by searching: [TopFarmersNZ](https://www.youtube.com/TopFarmersNZ)

Or visit: [msd-animal-health.co.nz](https://www.msd-animal-health.co.nz)

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REFERENCES:

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3. DairyNZ SmartSAMM. (2012). Lactation Technote 7: Use post-milking teat disinfection on every teat after every milking. [www.dairynz.co.nz](http://www.dairynz.co.nz)
4. DairyNZ SmartSAMM. (2012). Lactation Technote 5: Use good milking technique and a consistent routine. [www.dairynz.co.nz](http://www.dairynz.co.nz)

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