SOP No: ATT 010

SUBJECT: Arthrocentesis (Joint tap) in Ruminants (April 2015)

POLICY: This procedure may only be performed by, or under the supervision of operators skilled in the technique

PRECAUTIONS: Aseptic conditions are required to avoid introduction of infectious pathogens into the joint cavity. Restraint of the animal is necessary for the procedure, for cattle this is ideally a crush with a headlock or in the case of smaller ruminants this may be achieved by manual restraint either standing or in the lateral position. The choice of site is dictated by the joint which is to be sampled.

EQUIPMENT: Xylazine (or similar sedative) and appropriate syringes and needles
Animal Clippers
Surgical preparation solutions (iodine or chlorhexidine based)
Sterile dry cotton gauze 8 cm x 8 cm squares (or similar)
Sterile surgical gloves
Small sterile drape for working surface (tray, table or similar)
Tray, table or similar
Sterile syringes (e.g. 3 to 12 mL, depending on joint size)
Sterile small gauge needles (e.g. 21g, 20 g)
Collection tubes and culturettes

PROCEDURE: 1. Restraint: The animal is restrained using methods appropriate for its size and demeanour. Weigh the animal. Sedation used should be appropriate for age, size and health of the animal.
2. Preparation of site: The selected joint is clipped and prepared as for aseptic surgery (scrubbed with either the iodine or chlorhexidine preparation solutions and rinsed appropriately).
3. Joint Aspiration: The clinician puts on sterile gloves. Sterile syringes and needles are placed on the sterile working surface. A sterile needle is quickly placed into the joint space and observed for fluid flowing out of the needle hub. If no fluid flows, the needle may be manipulated and/or a syringe attached to the needle and gentle aspiration pressure applied. The fluid containing syringe is detached from the needle and the fluid placed into the
appropriate collection tubes and/or culturette. The needle is removed.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Results of fluid analysis will determine the recommendations.

DATE APPROVED: April 2009
15.04.2015

REFERENCES