

Paddock Card - Health Checks



FOR REGULAR CHECKS AND SICK ALPACAS SYSTEMATIC EXAMINATION FROM NOSE TO TAIL

1	BODY CONDITION SCORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple and valuable information about your alpaca. Check Paddock Card Body Scoring
2	POSTURE/MOVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunched Stiff gait Slow gait Camel neck Incoordination Tremors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rickets, vitamin D deficiency, hypophosphatemia: standing hunched, walking stiffly/slowly/with shortened steps, always last through the gate: in cria and alpaca under 2 years especially Pain: standing with a hunched backside Sick alpaca: camel-neck CALL YOUR VET Septic arthritis (in neonates): stiff gait with painful walking CALL YOUR VET Ryegrass Staggers, polioencephalomalacia: incoordination
3	EYES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mucous membrane colour Corneal colour Discharge Location in socket 	<p>Clear open eyes surrounded by pink mucous membranes are normal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anemia, barber's pole infestation: very pale or white mucous membranes Conjunctivitis: red mucous membranes Corneal oedema: blue eye Corneal ulcer: red eye Infection, blocked tear ducts, foreign body: weeping/discharge of one or both eyes Dehydration: sunken eyes
4	JAWS upper and lower <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thickenings discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tooth root abscesses: thickening of jaw bone, discharge Food impaction: lump on side of face above bottom jaw
5	GUMS & LIPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gum colour Crusts/ulcers Swelling 	<p>Inside of the gum should be pinkish in white and light coloured alpaca.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anemia: white or extremely pale mucous membranes Contagious ecthyma, orf: crusts around lips, ulcers in mucous membranes Bee sting, abscess
6	TEETH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length Occlusion 	<p>Check length. Overgrown teeth can reduce food intake especially on very low pasture. Check Paddock Card Body Scoring and Paddock Card Teeth</p>
7	EARS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swelling Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ear tag infection: swelling with discharge. Ticks & mites inside the ear: head shaking. Facial Eczema, photosensitivity, sunburn: swollen and painful ears Teeth problems: pain
8	SKIN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crusts Thickened skin Hair loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dermatophilus, bacterial infection: large areas with crusts Sarcoptic mange: thickened skin with hair loss, lesions on lips, lower legs, under tail, can be itchy
9	NECK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swelling Asymmetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury, abscess: swelling, discharge

*PEM: polioencephalomacia

10	LEGS & FEET <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lameness Swelling Heat Toenail length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wounds, fractures, sprains, skin problems, overgrown or infected toenails, pad abscess can all produce lameness, heat, swelling Joint problems: lameness, heat, swelling Interdigital infection (infection between the toes): lameness, discharge
11	TAIL (check also under tail) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Faeces Puss Colour of mucous membranes inside vagina Discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unpacking in females: tail away from body and up Colic, constipation, diarrhea: tail away from body and up Submissiveness: tail up and over body Diarrhoea: dirty tail Internal parasites: dirty tail/dags (not always present though) Anemia: white/pale mucous membranes Uterine infection: vaginal discharge, dirty tail
12	BODY TEMPERATURE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct use of thermometer – insert at least 4 cm and angle tip against the wall Compare with other alpacas 	<p>Temperature between 37.5 - 39 C can generally be considered normal. Environmental temperature and activity level affect body temperature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sick alpaca with infection: fever Sick alpaca not eating: lower temperature In shock: low temperature Hypothermia, hyperthermia: low and high temperature, respectively <p>Compare with the temperature of healthy alpacas of similar colour, size and gender, and with the same activity level if in doubt about the meaning of the temperature</p>
13	BELLIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genitals Udder Umbilicus (cria) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trauma to testicles: swelling, heat, pain, cuts and bruises Udder infection, mastitis: heat in udder, hard udder, lump in udder, pain Navel infection: swollen umbilicus, discharge Umbilical hernia: swelling on any size in umbilical area <p>All ages – check for ticks</p>

The **ALPACA HEALTH CHECK** will provide information that should help manage the alpacas. One of the most common problems in alpacas is caused by internal parasites. Weight loss and anemia are important signs of internal parasite problems (not necessarily both together). Keep an eye on the worm burden on your property by doing regular body scores and looking at mucous membranes. Do faecal egg counts and drench at the correct dose with the correct product. Discuss with your vet which drenching plan is best for your property.

If you have **an alpaca with slightly abnormal behaviour** DO A HEALTH CHECK and keep an eye on the animal to see if the changes become more prominent. If in doubt contact your vet. Early intervention is best!

An alpaca that doesn't feel well sits down a lot, does not follow the herd, may not eat nor use the dungpile - contact your vet asap. NEVER wait to see if it will be better the next day. Alpaca are very stoic animals that will often only show signs of being sick when a disease is well advanced. You have to act promptly.

An alpaca that becomes extremely sick in a very short period of time is an emergency. CALL THE VET.

A thermometer is an excellent and economic investment, which can provide important information quickly. Know how to take the temperature correctly.

If in doubt **CALL THE VET.**

<p>SIGNS OF COLIC</p> <p>Lying down on the side with any or all of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kicking around Rolling Head/neck arched back Laboured breathing Shallow short breathing Continuous moaning
