thrice daily milking (n=4) for a period of 28 days. Both groups were fed grass silage ad-lib and 8kg concentrates/head/day. Parameters measured included neutrophil cell counts, plasma cortisol concentration and mRNAn expression of anti-apoptotic markers. Neutrophils from cows milked once daily expressed greater relative quantities of the anti-apoptotic markers NFkB p65 subunit, iKBalpha, HSP70 and XIAP mRNA than cows milked three times daily at day 3 postpartum (P<0.05) but not at days 14 (P>0.05) or 28 (P>0.05). These results suggest that the increase in neutrophil numbers in cows milked once daily is due to the induction of an anti-apoptotic phenotype that has disappeared by day 14 postpartum.

Preliminary results from a survey on parasite control practices on lowland sheep farms in Ireland

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Interventional radiological procedures are increasingly common because of their cost-effectiveness compared with surgical procedures. Prolonged fluoroscopic exposures, particularly those associated with cardiovascular studies are responsible for some of the highest patient and staff radiation doses. Such exposures increase the risk of stochastic effects and regularly cross the threshold dose above which, deterministic effects such as erythema, epilation and ulceration are experienced. Radiation levels using dose area product and fluoroscopy time are currently being determined and compared for coronary angiograms (CA), percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) and permanent pacemaker insertion procedures (PPI) across 15 hospitals. Other factors such as operator grade, technique and equipment used are also recorded, and their potential effect on patient dose investigated.

To date, the results demonstrate a mean dose for CA procedures of 74.26Gycm², for PCI procedures 107.44Gycm², for PPI procedures 37.05Gycm². However, large intra-hospital and inter-hospital variations were noted. The screening time varied by a procedure-specific extent, and showed a strong relationship with radiation dose delivered. Other causal agents will be discussed. Due to the risks associated with X-ray exposure, radiation doses should be kept as low as reasonably achievable, consistent with good image quality. However, significant variations in radiation dose and image quality for coronary interventional procedures have been shown within and between hospitals in Ireland for the first time. Possible areas of standardisation and potential Diagnostic Reference Levels will be proposed.