



Cattle Vet AU

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Oesophageal (Stomach) Tubing A Calf

Step 1: Measure the distance from the calf's mouth to the shoulder
This approximates how far the tube should be inserted into the calf's oesophagus



Step 2: If calf is standing, it is best to back the calf into a corner so it can not move away from you and hold the head between your knees.
If the calf can not stand, sit the calf up between your legs.



Step 3: To prevent fluid from entering the lungs during insertion of the plastic tube into the calf's mouth, the tube should be kinked and held below the calf's head
Alternatively, the tube can be detached from the bottle.



Step 4: Dip the bulb of the tube in the electrolyte solution/milk to lubricate it.
Then stimulate the calf to open its mouth by placing your fingers in the side of the calf's mouth.



Step 5: Insert the bulb of the feeder into the calf's mouth to the back of the throat.
Allow the calf to swallow the tube.
Once the calf has swallowed the tube, gently advance the oesophageal tube to the level previously measured.



Step 6: Check that the tube is in the oesophagus by feeling the left side of the calf's neck.

It may feel smooth and you may be able to see the bulb in the oesophagus.
You can gently move the tube back and forth to assist in seeing and feeling the tube in the calf's oesophagus.
The windpipe feels firm and has rings/ridges.

Step 6: Check that the tube is in the oesophagus by feeling the left



Step 7: To administer the fluid, connect the tube to the bottle if previously removed, raise the bottle above the calf's head and allow the fluid to flow in by gravity (don't squeeze it in).

The calf may move around and vocalise as fluid fills the calf's rumen.



Step 8: Before removing the tube, kink off the tube or remove the tube from the bottle.
This will prevent fluid from entering the lungs as the tube is removed from the oesophagus.
Point the calf's head downwards.
Then gently pull the tube out in one smooth motion.

