

Forms of Mastitis

Ashish Sawant, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Animal Science
 Kristy H. Campbell, Extension Dairy Specialist, Animal Science

Subclinical Mastitis

- ◆ Most prevalent and costly form of mastitis
- ◆ Animal does not exhibit typical mastitis symptoms
 - No change in udder appearance
 - No observable changes in milk
- ◆ Milk production will be lowered, but likely overlooked
- ◆ Can only be detected with individual cow somatic cell count (SCC) or microbiological culture
- ◆ Infected cows serve as reservoirs and can infect other cows

Clinical Mastitis

- ◆ Onset of symptoms may take hours to days from time of infection
- ◆ Symptoms may last for days to weeks
- ◆ Severity depends on bacteria causing infection
- ◆ Symptoms may include:
 - Abnormal milk
 - × Flakes or clots
 - × Discolored or watery
 - Abnormal udder (swelling, heat, hard or sensitive to touch) may be slight to absent
 - Drop in milk production
- ◆ Treatment dependent on type of bacteria, time and duration of treatment

Acute Mastitis

- ◆ Sudden onset of symptoms
- ◆ Symptoms may include:
 - Fever
 - Off-feed and off-water
 - Rapid pulse
 - Weakness
 - Udder may be red, swollen, hard and/or painful to touch
 - Grossly abnormal milk
 - Dramatic drop in milk production
- ◆ Can be caused by coliforms, pseudomonas and other bacteria

Chronic Mastitis

- ◆ Of long duration (months to years)
- ◆ Symptoms vary depending on phase of infection
 - Cows may remain subclinically infected indefinitely
 - Cows may alter between clinical and subclinical mastitis
- ◆ Multiple infections in the same quarter within a lactation or into the next lactation are a sign of chronic mastitis