



FACTSHEET

VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH AMERICAN CAMELIDS

South American camelids have evolved to live near the equator at high altitudes. Here the ultra violet light levels from the sun are much higher than here in Norfolk, especially during the winter.

Vitamin D is produced by the skin when it is exposed to sunlight, as well as being obtained from the diet in foods such as fish oils, liver and cheese. Concentrate feeds made for camelids will contain some vitamin D too. There is no vitamin D camelid milk.

Vitamin D is needed for regulating calcium levels in the blood, and deficiency will lead to rickets in growing animals and metabolic bone disease in adults. Signs of rickets include lethargy, reluctance to play, lameness, recumbency, stunted growth and sometimes angular limb deformities. Joints can be swollen. Signs are most commonly seen at 4-7 months old.

To avoid this all growing animals should receive vitamin D supplementation in the UK. This is most reliably done by injection, but can also be given orally.

INJECTIONS

Duphafal A, D AND E: Give 1,000 i.u /kg under the skin (sub cutaneously) every 8 weeks during the autumn and winter, October to March. As with all injectable products this is not licensed for use in camelids.

ORAL PREPARATIONS

Give 1,000 i.u/kg every 4-6 weeks. Ensure that you have accurate weights for your animals, and read the concentration of the products.

Be careful not to overdose, as camelids can suffer from serious/ lethal poisoning.

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