

Break the DD Cycle in Just Ten Days

Understanding the Problem: Time is Everything

Digital dermatitis is one of the most costly diseases affecting dairy herds today, but here's what most farmers don't realize: timing makes all the difference. Just like mastitis, when you see an active DD case, you need to act immediately. The window for easy treatment is only 10-15 days before these lesions become chronic and much harder to heal.

(Resource article: [Hairy Heel Warts in Cattle: Symptoms, Causes, and Treatment](#))

Think of it this way: you wouldn't ignore a clinical mastitis case and hope your teat dip program handles it. The same urgency applies to DD. When prevention fails, you must switch to treatment mode immediately.

Step 1: Assessment and Documentation (Day 0)

Before starting any treatment program, you need to know exactly what you're dealing with. Walk through your barn, robot area, or parlour during milking to count all active DD cases in your herd. This baseline documentation is crucial - not just for measuring progress, but for proving to yourself that the protocol works.

Winner Tip: Take clear "before" pictures of the affected hooves of about 3-5 cows. Most farmers are amazed when they compare these initial photos to what they see just 10 days later.

In a typical 100-cow herd, you might identify 20 cows with active DD cases, giving you a 20% infection rate—a baseline you can track and improve over time.

([Overall Protocol products video](#))

Day 1 – Clean, Apply, Wrap

This is where the real work begins, but it's simpler than most farmers expect. The key is doing it right the first time.

1. **Thoroughly clean the affected area with a dry cloth or an air hose.** This cannot be emphasized enough - avoid using water at all costs. Water actually fills the pores of the skin, and we want **Hoof-fit Gel** to be there instead of water.
2. **Apply Hoof-fit Gel directly to the lesion and interdigital space.** Don't be stingy with the product, but don't overapply either. Make sure you get good coverage on the actual

DD lesion and the space between the digits where bacteria like to hide. [VIDEO CLIP](#)

3. **Wrap with Intra Tape or Intra Eco Tape for extended contact.** The wrap isn't just protection - it's what keeps the treatment in place and working continuously for the next three days. A properly applied wrap takes about one minute per cow and sets the stage for effective healing.

Remember, you're treating ALL identified DD cases on day 1. Don't wait, don't prioritize - treat them all. This initial application prepares every affected animal for effective treatment and starts the healing process immediately. **Our goal is to break the DD cycle.**

Day 3 – Remove Wrap, Most Are Healed

This is the day that converts skeptical farmers into believers. When you remove those wraps on day 3 and inspect the treated areas, you'll typically find that 12 out of 20 cows are already healed. That's a 60% success rate in just three days.

For the remaining 8 cows that still show signs of DD, the protocol calls for a quick brush application of **Hoof-fit Gel** without wrapping again. This follow-up treatment is much faster than the initial application and helps push those borderline cases toward complete healing. If brushing isn't practical due to timing or facilities, you can use **Repiderma** spray or **Hoof Sol Spray** as a less-preferred, but acceptable alternative follow-up.

The cows that are healed can return to normal management, while you focus additional attention only on those that need it.

Day 7 – Quick Recheck for Remaining Cases

For the small percentage of cases that need extra attention, day 7 includes a quick follow-up that usually completes the protocol. At this point, you're typically looking at only 3 of the original 20 DD cows that need one more application with a wrap.

Re-examine those 8 cows from day 3, and you'll find that most have continued healing. Only the most stubborn cases - usually those that were more advanced or chronic to begin with - will need this second full treatment cycle. Apply the **Hoof-fit Gel** and wrap these remaining cases just as you did on day one.

Document this progress with more photos. The visual proof of healing is powerful for building confidence in the protocol and helps you fine-tune your technique for future cases.

Day 10 – Final Assessment and Outstanding Results

By day 10, most farmers report complete resolution of their DD cases. The typical result is 18 of the original 20 DD cows completely healed, with only 2 chronic cases remaining. This represents a 92% success rate - dramatically better than the 58% success rate typically seen with antibiotic treatments.

Those remaining 2 cases are usually chronic lesions that existed before you started the protocol. Even in these challenging cases, significant improvement is often seen, and healing may occur with additional treatment cycles.

Real-World Results from Farmers and Veterinarians

The proof is in the field results, and veterinarians and farmers across Canada report significant improvements with this protocol.

Ontario hoof trimmer Alain Pitre shared, *"Great products and great people behind them! Started using these over a year ago and now I push them on my herds that I take care of."*

Our on-farm reports consistently show:

- Faster healing (7-10 days versus weeks with traditional approaches)
- Fewer repeat and chronic cases are developing
- Complete elimination of production losses from withdrawal periods
- More assured long-term herd health planning

You can find detailed treatment information and additional resources at our [proven DD treatment guide](#) and complete [protocol documentation](#).

Transition to Prevention Mode: Maintaining Your Success

Once you've conquered the active DD cases, it's time to shift from treatment back to prevention. This is where many farmers make a critical mistake - they think the job is done. Just like with mastitis, you need a strong prevention program to keep new cases from developing.

(Resource: [The risk of chronic hairy heel wart reservoirs and how to prevent it](#))

For Herds Previously Using Harsh Products

If your herd has been exposed to formaldehyde, acidified copper sulphate, or other harsh chemicals, you're dealing with additional challenges. These products cause significant damage to the skin over time, creating small cracks and drying that actually makes DD problems worse. The skin needs time to heal from this chemical damage before your prevention program can be fully effective.

Foot Bath Protocol

Your foot bath schedule needs to be more intensive initially. Run your foot baths twice per week for the first four weeks - we recommend two consecutive days. Use **Hoof Sol BATH** for manual systems or **Hoof Sol Bath FLEX** for automatic foot baths, both at a 5% solution. After this intensive four-week period, you can reduce to once weekly maintenance.

Remember to refresh or top up the solution after 250 cow passes to maintain effectiveness. The solution level should remain consistent at 4-5 inches.

Weekly Spraying Protocol for Maximum Protection

Our recommended spraying protocol provides consistent protection against infectious hoof diseases. For established herds, spray hooves with **Hoof Sol Spray** once weekly as a prevention measure. For starter herds or those with active DD issues, increase frequency to twice weekly, for example, Monday and Thursday.

The key advantage of spraying over footbaths is the consistency of the product. With spraying, every cow receives a clean, full-strength product. In contrast, footbaths become contaminated as more cows pass through. Cow number 200 walks through a significantly dirtier solution than cow number 1, reducing effectiveness when you need it most.

Maintenance Phase Prevention

After your herd has recovered and skin health has been restored, continue the weekly foot bath protocol. This ongoing prevention is what keeps your DD rates low and prevents the expensive cycle of constant treatment. Our goal is to keep lameness under 5%!

Special Management for Dry Cows and Heifers

Don't forget your dry cows and heifers in your prevention program. These animals often can't practically go through foot baths, but they're still susceptible to DD. Weekly spraying with **Hoof Sol Spray** provides effective prevention for these groups and ensures your entire herd stays protected.

The Golden Rule for Long-term Success

Always treat new DD cases immediately with **Hoof-fit Gel** when you spot them during routine checks. Don't wait for your next scheduled foot bath day - treat the cow the same day. This immediate response prevents new chronic cases from developing and keeps your overall herd DD rates low.

This comprehensive protocol provides a systematic approach to controlling DD in your herd and keeping it to a minimum. The key is following through on every step and understanding that

successful DD management, like mastitis management, requires both effective treatment of active cases and consistent prevention for the entire herd.



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