Prevention Is Critical to Proper Navel Care

- Maintain a clean, sanitary maternity pen.
- Remove the calf as soon as possible after birth.
- Wear exam gloves (nitrile or other materials are acceptable) when handling wet navels.
- Remove bedding or any other foreign material from the navel and dip the navel with 7 percent iodine tincture or a commercial navel dip product.
- Change the solution and clean the dip cups between each calf.
  - Try disposable bathroom paper cups to make cleanup easy!
- Do not cut or clamp the navel cord unless directed by a veterinarian.
- Dipping is preferred over spraying to ensure even coverage of the navel cord.
- Navel dipping can be repeated once the calf is moved to a permanent housing location or within 24 hours.
- Check the navel daily for pain, swelling, or foul odor.
- Navels will typically take 7–10 days to heal.

Goals for Navel Care

- Dry
- Well healed
- Pain free
- No swelling
- Closed or no hernia
- Inflexible or shriveled cord
Symptoms of a Problem

- Swollen navel
- Pain or signs of discomfort
- Visible hernia sac
- Drainage or foul odor

Complications

- Lethargy
- Pain or swelling
- Decreased appetite
- Labored breathing
- Joint swelling
- Septic infections
- Death

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