

## TEAT SKIN CONDITION AND MASTITIS

Bad teat skin condition is a direct risk for mastitis. Indeed, some bacteria like *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus agalactiae* can live and multiply into lesions and wounds. Damage teats are much more difficult to clean, which increases the infection pressure and the risk of environmental mastitis.

Many factors can have an impact on the teat skin condition. Looking regularly to the teats skin is essential to detect as early as possible any damage.

### a) The weather

The weather can directly impact on the teat skin condition. During winter, the cold temperature together with the wind and a wet environment can dry the skin and weaken it.



TIP: long hair, thin and dry skin are the signs of cold and windy weather. It weakens natural skin defenses, causing skin damages. Skin damages are a risk for contagious mastitis, and are also harder to clean up.

Photo: Courtesy of DVM Robin Franzon, dairy technical support, CID LINES

### b) The milking machine

In various ways, the milking machine damages the teat skin: too high vacuum, liners not adapted to the teats, liners too old to give adequate massage, poor stimulation thus over-milking. A poor milking procedure has also a huge impact on the cow: poor stimulation, stress during milking and delay to detach the cluster at the end of the milking also lead to over-milking. To detect such a problem, look after the following signs: everted sphincter, hyperkeratosis, compression rings, blue skin (congested skin), petechiae...

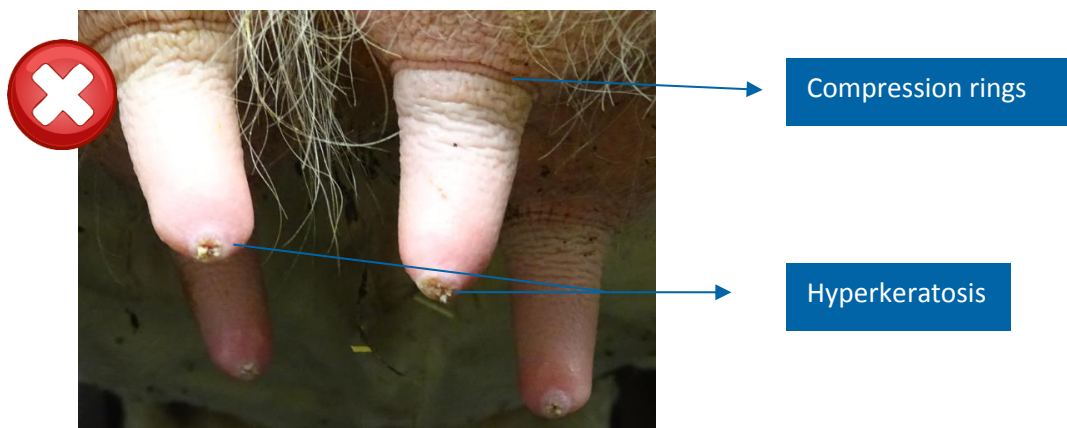


Photo: Courtesy of DVM Robin Franzon, dairy technical support, CID LINES

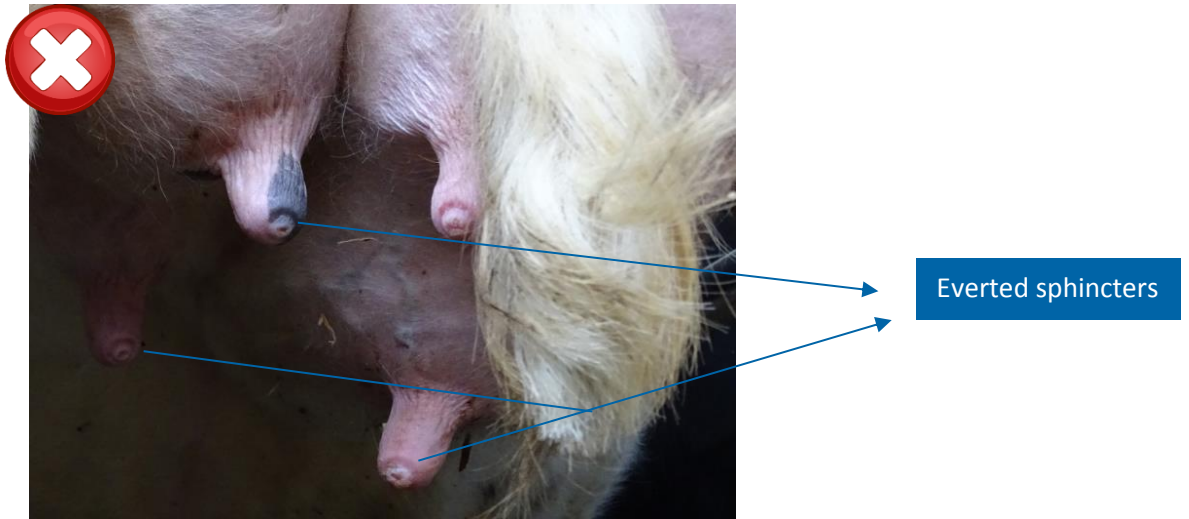
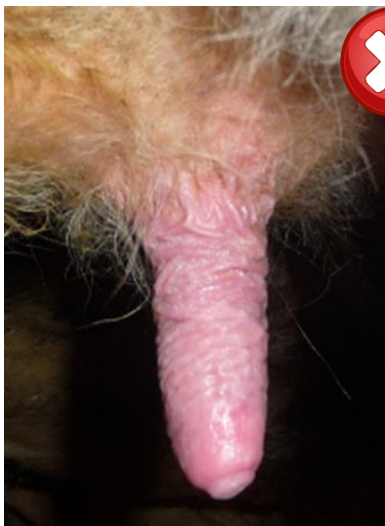


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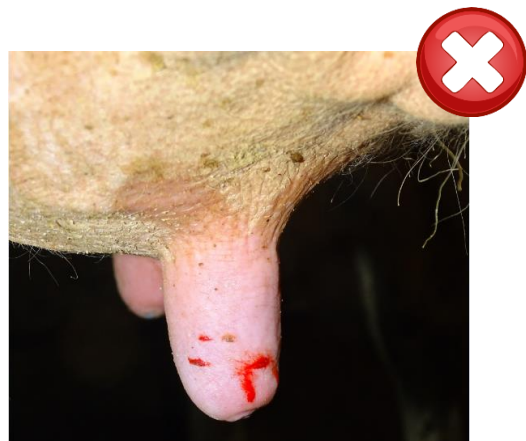
**c) Bad quality products used on skin**

All disinfectants products are not necessarily made to apply on skin. Some farmers are using peracetic acid based products (picture b.) or chlorine based products normally used for equipment cleaning. Although it may be cheap to buy as such, it may become very expensive at the end as it damages and destroys the natural teat skin protection.

A “disinfectant product” is usually not a good “cleaning product”. Using a post-dip product as a pre-dip without cleaning properties makes it difficult to remove the dirt. Thus it damages the skin when wiping off the teats with a wet towel or a paper tissue (picture c.)



b. Use of peracetic acid for disinfection

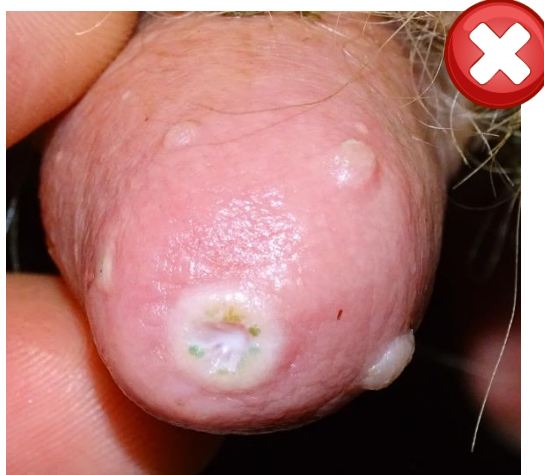


c. Aggressive cleaning preparation on a fragile skin

Photo: Courtesy of DVM Robin Franzon, dairy technical support, CID LINES

**d) Viral skin infection**

The most common viral infection is caused by *papillomavirus*. The warts (picture d.) colonize the skin and disturb sphincter closing while located around the teat sphincter. Moreover, warts are sometimes teared out during teat preparation causing pain and stress for the cow during milking.



d. Warts on teat skin in heifer

Photo: Courtesy of DVM Robin Franzon, dairy technical support, CID LINES