

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
LARGE ANIMAL TEACHING

SOP No:	ATT 010
SUBJECT:	Arthrocentesis (Joint tap) in Ruminants
POLICY:	This procedure may only be performed by, or under the supervision of operators skilled in the technique
PRECAUTIONS:	Aseptic conditions are required to avoid introduction of infectious pathogens into the joint cavity. Restraint of the animal is necessary for the procedure, for cattle this is ideally a crush with a headlock or in the case of smaller ruminants this may be achieved by manual restraint either standing or in the lateral position. The choice of site is dictated by the joint which is to be sampled.
EQUIPMENT:	Xylazine (or similar sedative) and appropriate syringes and needles Animal Clippers Surgical preparation solutions (iodine or chlorhexidine based) Sterile dry cotton gauze 8 cm x 8 cm squares (or similar) Sterile surgical gloves Small sterile drape for working surface (tray, table or similar) Tray, table or similar Sterile syringes (e.g. 3 to 12 mL, depending on joint size) Sterile small gauge needles (e.g. 21g, 20 g) Collection tubes and culturettes
PROCEDURE:	1. <u>Restraint:</u> The animal is restrained using methods appropriate for its size and demeanour. Sedation used should be appropriate for age, size and health of the animal. 2. <u>Preparation of site:</u> The selected joint is clipped and prepared as for aseptic surgery (scrubbed with either the iodine or chlorhexidine preparation solutions and rinsed appropriately). 3. <u>Joint Aspiration:</u> The clinician puts on sterile gloves. Sterile syringes and needles are placed on the sterile working surface. A sterile needle is quickly placed into the joint space and observed for fluid flowing out of the needle hub. If no fluid flows, the needle may be manipulated and/or a syringe attached to the needle and gentle aspiration pressure applied. The fluid containing syringe is detached from the needle and the fluid placed into the appropriate collection tubes and/or culturette. The needle is removed.
RECOMMENDATIONS:	Results of fluid analysis will determine the recommendations.
DATE APPROVED:	April 2009
REVISED:	

REFERENCES

1. **Chapter 21. Clinical examination of the musculoskeletal system.** M.L. Doherty. In: *Veterinary Clinical Examination and Diagnosis*. O.M. Radostits, I.G. Joe Mayhew, Doreen M. Houston (editors). WB Saunders 2000. ISBN 0-7020-2476-7