

**Following the recent outbreak of disease in Victoria and in preparation for its inevitable spread to other states, the following treatment and prevention programmes have been developed. The primary aim of these programmes is to limit losses in racing, fancy and stud pigeons in the event of disease and allow the disease to move through the loft as quickly as possible.**

This update assumes the disease is Reovirus. To achieve this aim, we must first prepare our healthy uninfected birds for exposure by stimulating immunity. We must also be well-equipped with knowledge and a strategy to implement an immediate treatment plan should the disease be detected in a loft. For our most important birds, an intensive individual bird treatment plan has been developed to protect the lives of the most valuable stock birds. A proactive approach and the ability to respond quickly at the first sign of illness are the key to minimising losses, the primary aim of our current approach to this disease. These instructions (January 6th 2017) may change according to new knowledge and we recommend that fanciers report on their experiences with these treatment plans. Please contact Dr Marshall to identify if your loft is located in an infected or uninfected area.

## Our Approach to the Disease

Whilst the exact cause of this disease is yet to be confirmed, and there is no possibility of a vaccine in the near future, our approach is to treat the environment and to purge the germ through the gut as quickly as possible. The plan to eliminate as much of the virus from the environment as possible is achieved by a comprehensive disinfection plan. In addition, treatment plans are implemented to accelerate the movement of the germ through the gut as quickly as possible. This limits the toxic and damaging effect of the germ on the liver and in doing so lessens the likelihood of death.

## Racing Pigeons: The Plan for Uninfected Lofts

This treatment plan is for uninfected birds that have not been exposed to the disease. The focus of treatment is to promote good health through strict hygiene and includes routine preventative treatments against coccidiosis, worms, lice and mites which are incorporated into our recommended Immune Stimulating Plan. This plan prepares the immune system for anticipation of likely infection and promotes a quick return to full fitness following recovery. Birds in uninfected lofts should follow their normal loft flying routines to promote fitness and health. Strict hygiene practices should also be followed to maintain strong immunity.

### Immune Stimulating Plan

Day	In Drinking Water	On Food	Additional Instructions
Day 1	KD Powder	Turbobooster, V <sub>2</sub> :8 Powder, E Powder & Bloomford	<p><b>Fvite should be made available in a dish fresh each day.</b></p> <p><b>Routine preventative treatments</b> against coccidiosis, lice, mites and worms are given on rotation each 3 weeks on <i>optional medication days</i>.</p> <p><b>Week 1:</b> Carlox (2ml/L) for 2 days  <b>Week 2:</b> S76 (5ml/2L) for 1 day  <b>Week 3:</b> GT Wormer (5ml/2L) for 1 day</p>
Day 2	Dufoplus, Ioford & Megamix	Turbobooster, E Powder & Bloomford	
Day 3	Dufoplus, Ioford & Megamix	Turbobooster, V <sub>2</sub> :8 Powder, E Powder & Bloomford	
Day 4	KD Powder	Turbobooster, E Powder & Bloomford	
Day 5	Optional medication days for routine preventative treatments	Turbobooster, V <sub>2</sub> :8 Powder, E Powder & Bloomford	
Day 6		Turbobooster, E Powder & Bloomford	
Day 7		Turbobooster, V <sub>2</sub> :8 Powder, E Powder & Bloomford	

**DISINFECTION PLAN:** The disease appears to be spread mainly via the droppings and especially through the drinking water. It may also be spread via the feathers, or in the environment on wood shavings, glass or rubber where it can persist for long periods. This explains the difficulties in containing the disease in outbreak areas. Strict hygiene is required to control the spread of the disease both within and between lofts. This disinfection plan prevents the build up of germs that burden immunity and in doing so promotes good health.

**FOOD HYGIENE:** In order to lessen the possibility of the spread of the disease via contaminants in the environment, it is best to access food from merchants that offer strict biosecurity measures if you purchase your food from within infected areas..

**BIO-SECURITY:** Follow strict personal hygiene practices. Wash clothes using a hot water cycle above 59C with Pine O Clean or Protector as a disinfectant. Do not visit other lofts or have others visit your loft. Do not congregate with other pigeon fanciers. Utilise technologies such as Skype to communicate.

**BE PREPARED:** All fanciers should be prepared for possible infection and have a Flock Treatment Plan on hand should this become necessary. An emergency response kit should include a crop needle, ER Formula and Quik Gel as well as Enrotril, Sulfa AVS and Megamix. This will enable fanciers to initiate the Flock Treatment Plan and Individual Bird Treatment Plan immediately at the first sign of the disease and in doing so save many birds.

### Disinfecting Instructions for Uninfected Racing Lofts

- Scrape clean the loft floor and perches daily of all droppings
- Remove all dust, dander and other debris daily by sweeping or vacuuming
- Disinfect the entire loft, food trays and drinking water containers with KD Powder & Protector once a week. Flame cleaning will also disinfect the loft of this germ.
- Provide KD Powder in the drinking water twice weekly as part of the Immune Stimulating Plan
- Replenish the drinking water twice daily
- Add KD to the bath water and bathe the birds twice weekly