

# PREVENTION OF YOUNG BIRD DISEASE

Dr Rob Conradie

The five main viruses responsible for this syndrome are:

- Paramyxo virus. This is easily prevented by using Nobilus Paramyxo given at 3 weeks with a booster given at 7 weeks (4 weeks later). If this vaccine is unaffordable then Nobilus ND broiler can be used with good results. Always use registered vaccines whether it is a pigeon or poultry vaccine.

This vaccine gives a partial non-specific immunity to the other viruses as a result of Interferon release. Vaccinations at 3 weeks and a booster at 7 weeks are vitally important.

- **CIRCO VIRUS.** Found to be the most common cause of Young Bird Disease.
- Adeno Virus
- Herpes virus
- Rotavirus has also now become a problem in many countries.

There is no registered freely available vaccine for the last four viruses.

There is also no specific treatment for any virus disease in pigeons.

Treatment is aimed at boosting the immune system.

Immunity to these viruses comes from antibodies and white blood cells produced by the Lymphoid/Tonsillar tissue of the body.

60 to 80% of this tissue is found in the intestinal tract.

If the intestinal tract is cared for, the lymphoid tissue will function optimally.

Caring for the lymphoid tissue is particularly important with Circo virus because this virus destroys lymphoid tissue making the bird particularly susceptible to many other disease conditions.

## **Keep intestines healthy:**

- Prevent perforation or ulceration of tract by keeping birds free of Coccidiosis and worms. If the parent birds are kept free of these parasites the babies will only become infected very much later.
- Use probiotics, found in **Intestum and Enteroplus** to form a protective/slime layer on the mucosa, acidify the intestine, improve digestion and have a mild antibiotic like effect.

Many fanciers use Jik, chlorine and other disinfectants in the water to prevent and cure YBD. It MAY only prevent viral transmission via drinking water. It does not cure the virus. Please remember that this is going to sterilize the intestine, even more than antibiotics will. It will kill good and bad bacteria. The good bacteria are essential to maintain intestinal health.

## **Use specific scientifically proven immune boosters.**

- Beta glucan found in **Intestum, Enteroplus and Medimune.** Beta glucan activates white blood cells, increases immunoglobulins and “killer” T cells.
- Vit. C found in **Viroban and Medimune**

- Vit. E found in **Viroban**

**Use herbal remedies as additional aid.**

- Elder, Sutherlandia, Thyme, Rhubarb root and Tumeric all found in **Medibrew**.

**Suggested preventative program.**

- Intestum on the food if birds are eating
- Entero-Plus in water if they were to be off their food
- Viroban and Medibrew in the water

These can be given preferably every day or otherwise 2-3 times a week.

Program does not need to be followed as is but info given above is a guide.

This medication can be given to parents while babies are in the nest, continuing with the babies after weaning.

- Medimune tabs to babies in the nest from 14 days of age. This prepares them for possible exposure to YBD and upcoming Paramyxo vaccine at 3 weeks.

If the program given above were to prove too costly and only one were to be used then **Intestum** would be the best choice. It contains pre- and probiotics, beta glucan, Calcium, Magnesium and Methionine.

The second wave of YBD that we experience when birds start mixing in the baskets can be prevented to a certain extent by following the program given above. Start this program when your training starts.