

Changes in standing behaviour identify cows at risk for digital and interdigital dermatitis

Kathryn L Proudfoot, Marina AG von Keyserlingk, Douglas M Veira and Daniel M Weary

The Problem

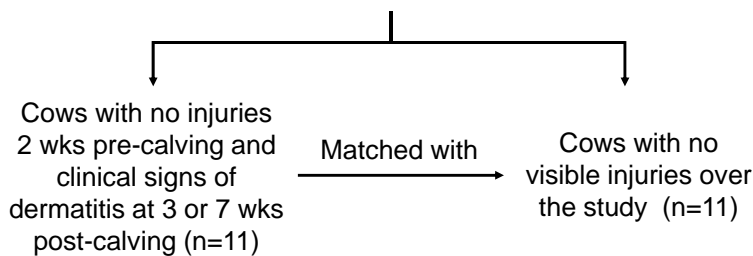
Dairy cows housed in freestall barns have a high prevalence of claw disease, especially in the first few months after calving

The Objective

To determine whether standing behaviour during transition could identify cows at risk for digital and interdigital dermatitis after calving

Methodology

Daily standing time and number of standing bouts of multiparous Holstein dairy cows (n=46) were monitored for 2 wks pre- to 2 wks post-calving



Digital dermatitis



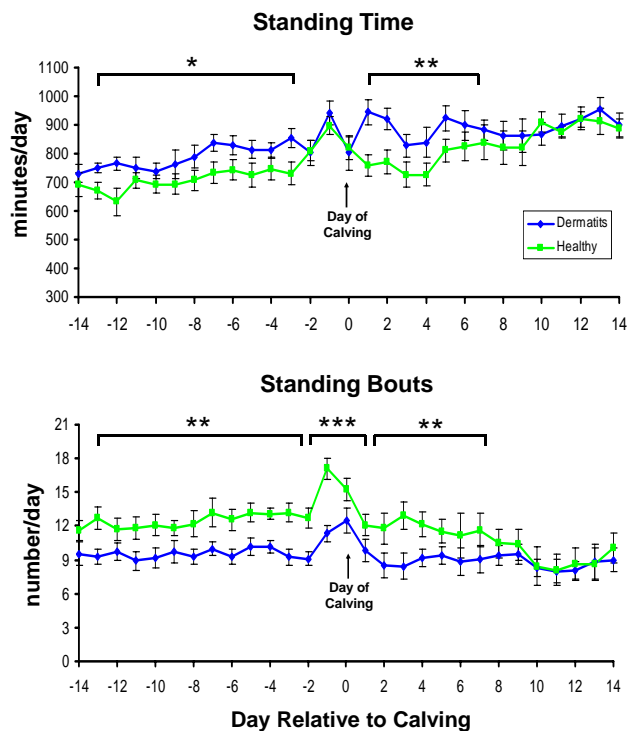
Interdigital dermatitis

Results



Cows that developed dermatitis **spent more time standing** and had **fewer standing bouts** during the period around calving compared to healthy cows

The difference in **standing bouts** is especially clear on the days around calving



Implications

Changes in standing behaviour during transition, particularly in the days around calving, can identify cows at risk for digital and interdigital dermatitis. Early identification of cows most at risk for dermatitis may help improve treatment and prevention.