



# PENGUIN VETERINARY CENTRE

7 Crescent Street Penguin Tas. 7316

ph [64371331](tel:64371331)

email: [penguinvet@gmail.com](mailto:penguinvet@gmail.com)

[www.penguinvet.com.au](http://www.penguinvet.com.au)

**CAMELS** are grazing and browsing ruminants, eating grasses, shrubs, fruits and leaves. They need a high fibre diet to digest their food properly. They are desert-adapted and so may not thrive where the environment is moist.

**Vaccinations** As for cattle. 5-in-1 at 2, 3 & 15 months, then annually

**Worming** Gut worms are shared with other ruminants [sheep, cattle, goats, deer, alpaca] especially if pasture-grazed in moist conditions. They seem not to develop immunity with age, remaining susceptible lifelong. However they are worst affected when young, pregnant, or raising a calf.

A faecal worm-count is advised [We can do this for you: bring in a ½ cup of fresh faeces, collected into a sealed plastic bag] Then you will know what worms, and how many, are present in your stock. You can then determine a drenching program to suit your stocking rate, climate & pasture type.

Use an Ivermectin-derived drench is almost always best, using the same dose rate as for cattle. In Tasmania, drench each each 3 months, but especially when Autumn rains break a Summer dry & again in early Spring.

**Other Parasites** such as lice, bacterial dermatitis & coccidial scours are more prevalent in moist conditions & where camels are close-stocked or suffering malnutrition, transport stress etc.

**Lifespan** 25 – 30 years

**Puberty** at 3-4 years of age, younger if well nourished

**Breeding Cycle** Females are in heat for 5-6 days, at 25-44day intervals during winter. In mild climatic conditions well-fed camels may cycle all year. Signs of heat include bleating, restlessness, a swollen vulva +/- a clear vulval discharge.

**Mating** Can occur at any time during her heat, & ovulation is induced by mating. Conception rate is only about 50%, although possibly higher when the camel is well nourished.

**Pregnancy** 355 -390 days [11 – 13 monts]

**Birthing** Should take 20-40 mins from when the waters break. Camels do not lick their calves, which would normally dry rapidly under the desert sun.

**Calf-heat** a well nourished mother may return to heat a month after calving, but in desert conditions normally not for a year

**Weaning** 6-12 months, depending on available fodder

**Marking** of males, at 2-6 weeks

**Diet** They need mature forage. Avoid over-lush pasture, especially clovers. Supplements of hay, chaff, vegetables & cattle fodder are OK but avoid starchy food such as apples, potatoes & bread. Offer any concentrates after their hay, to ensure the camel maintains dietary fibre. Sheep, cattle or goat pellets may be acceptable, but not dairy mash nor thoroughbred horse rations, which are too rich.