



## SCC DIAGNOSTICS TOOL BOX

### QCF-1: White Towel Test

Pre- and post-milking teat dipping has been demonstrated as one of the most effective means of lowering mammary gland infection. Pre-milking teat dipping is predominantly effective in reducing the numbers of environmental pathogens on teat surfaces prior to applying the milking machine. Post-milking teat dipping has been shown to be very effective in lowering contagious mastitis pathogens on teat surfaces after the completion of milking. Fifty percent of new contagious mastitis infections can be prevented by complete and consistent post-milking teat dipping.

There are many effective teat dip preparations on the market today that have been tested for efficacy in successfully killing mastitis pathogens. A list of effective products that have been adequately tested is published each year by the National Mastitis Council and can be found in the NMC Annual Meeting Proceedings (<http://www.nmconline.org/docs/Teatbibl.pdf>).

The key to effective use of teat dipping as a mastitis control tool for lowering mammary gland infect is consistent and complete teat coverage at every milking. The photograph at right shows what is meant by complete teat coverage.



### White Towel Test

The so-called white towel test is an excellent easy method of providing immediate feedback to milkers about the effectiveness of their teat dipping.

1. Immediately after the milker has dipped the teats, wrap a clean paper towel around base of the teat while blotting the teat dip from the entire teat.
2. Open the towel and display the teat dip pattern.

The photograph below shows two examples of the teat dip pattern. The bottom shows the teat dip pattern of an almost a completely dipped teat; the top demonstrates the teat dip pattern of a partially dipped teat.

