



ALPACA CARE GUIDE

Alpacas need a little extra consideration to help them thrive and live a healthy life. Especially those with chronic health conditions. Regular health checks, faecal exams and weigh-ins may uncover diseases before they become chronic and debilitating.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Limbs and Locomotion

Arthritis is one of the most common health concerns in older alpacas. Untreated arthritis could eventually manifest as debilitating chronic pain and a general refusal to move around very much, especially in the cold.

Regular toenail trimming may minimise the development of arthritis and conformational faults.

Eyes

Checking mucous membrane colour and BCS simultaneously is recommended to screen for the presence of anaemia as a potential indicator of Haemonchus, Mycoplasma, stomach ulcers or copper deficiency.

Camelids are very resilient and do not readily show signs of moderate anaemia. Routinely checking mucous membranes is important to detect changes before serious debilitation occurs.



Teeth

Clinical signs of dental disease include weight loss, abnormal chewing, abrupt cessation of chewing as if a sudden pain has struck, partially chewed fibres in faecal pellets, swellings on the upper or lower jaws, odor or discharge from a nostril, apparent sensitivity to drinking cold water, and visibly worn or deformed teeth.

Overgrown incisors may be trimmed if necessary, but not for cosmetic reasons.