

# Difficulties In Brooding Chicks

By H. M. HYRE  
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OF MANY troubles affecting young chickens, coccidiosis is the most serious and causes more losses than any other disease after chicks are two weeks old. During the first week or ten days, pullorum disease, when the chicks are badly infected, is disastrous, but this loss can be avoided by obtaining chicks from sources free from pullorum infection including flocks from which the eggs are obtained and incubators in which they are hatched.



H. M. Hyre

Coccidiosis is caused by one-celled parasites that can be seen only with a microscope. These parasites may be spread in various ways, such as by wild birds or animals, as well as by domestic poultry. It is not possible to rid a farm of coccidiosis by starting with clean stock. The parasites live in the intestinal tract and multiply at a rapid rate.

Control of coccidiosis is not so difficult when the life history of the causative organism is understood. The coccidia pass from the infected birds with the droppings. Immediately after leaving the body the parasites are not infectious, but must remain on the outside of the body from 30 to 48 hours or more before they are again capable of causing the disease if picked up by other birds. The length of the period which the parasites must remain on the outside of the body before they are again infectious depends on moisture and temperature conditions in the brooder house. Warm, moist conditions are most favorable for the development of these parasites.

Strict sanitation is the only effective means of control known. The disease is most likely to affect chicks two to eight weeks old. During this period the brooder house should be thoroughly cleaned and the floor swept at least every five days. Absolute dryness is essential. Feeders and watering fountains should be of such type that the feed and water supply will not become contaminated with droppings. In case of an outbreak of coccidiosis, the brooder house floor should be swept daily from ten days to two weeks.

Mature birds are the most dangerous source of infection for this disease. For this reason the growing stock should never come in contact with the old birds.

Any treatment is beneficial only insofar as it helps the body to eliminate the parasites. A one or two-day feeding of a 20 to 30 per cent milk flush is quite effective in helping remove the parasites from the birds.

Sanitation is the only effective means of control known.



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