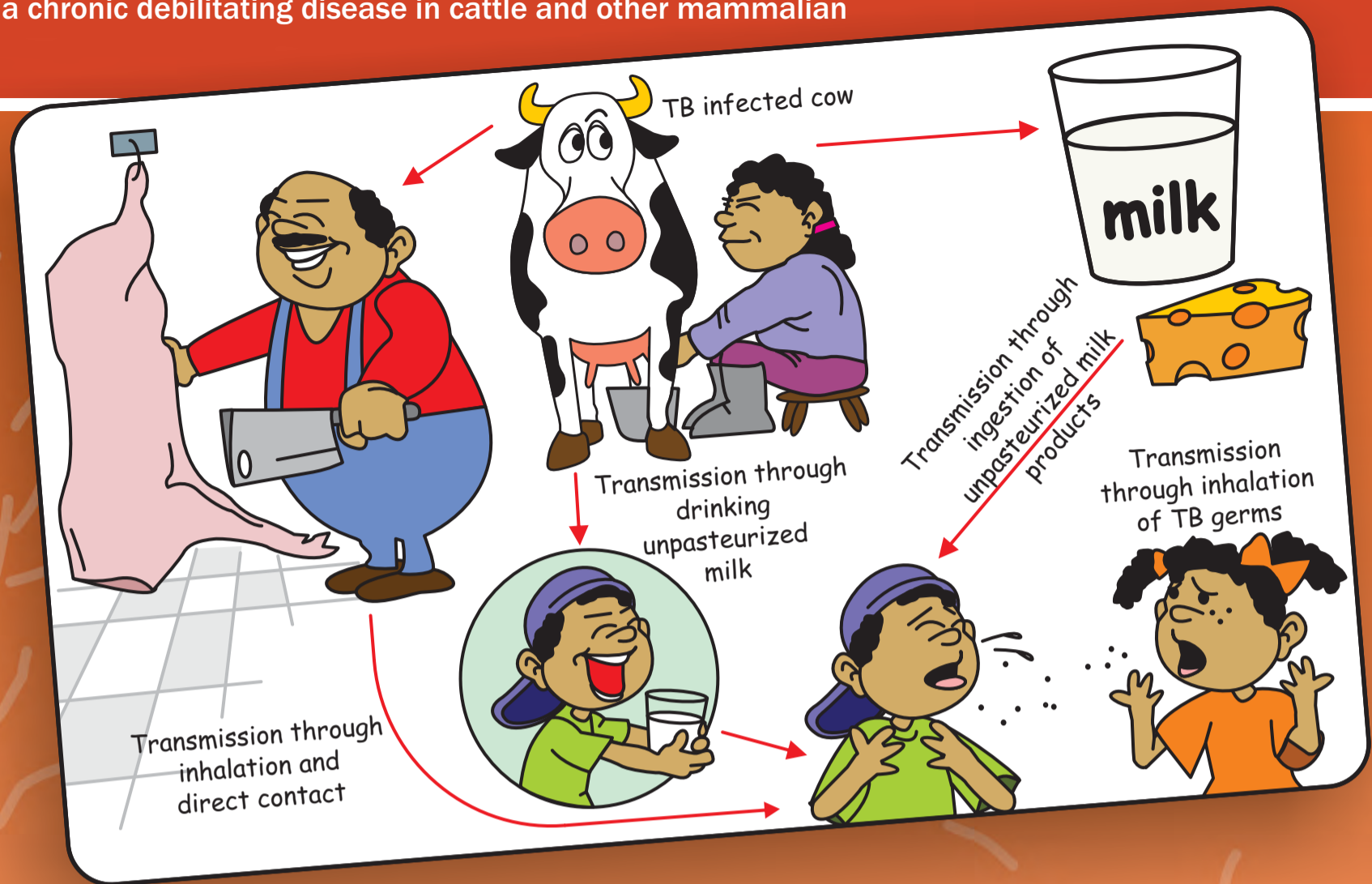


Bovine Tuberculosis (BTB)

Bovine tuberculosis (BTB) is a chronic debilitating disease in cattle and other mammalian species including humans.



Causes

Bovine tuberculosis is caused by *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*), a member of the complex species. The primary bacterium that causes tuberculosis in humans is *M. tuberculosis*.

Transmission

People are most commonly infected with *M. bovis* by drinking or eating contaminated and unpasteurised milk and milk products. Infection can also occur through direct contact with a wound of an infected animal during slaughter or hunting, or by inhaling the bacteria exhaled by animals infected with *M. bovis*. Direct transmission from animals to humans through inhalation is thought to be rare, but *M. bovis* can be spread directly from person to person when infected people cough or sneeze.

People at risk

- People who drink raw milk and products made from it
- People eating undercooked meat from infected animals
- Veterinarians
- Abattoir and farm workers
- Animal Health Technicians
- Butchers
- Hunters

Clinical symptoms in humans

- Fever
- Coughing
- Night sweat
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Infected person can die if the disease is untreated

Preventative measures

- Don't drink unpasteurized milk
- Don't eat unpasteurized milk products
- Don't eat uncooked meat
- Avoid close contact with infected animals, their wounds or meat
- Always wash and disinfect hands after working with animals/or animal by-products

How does this disease affect animals?

Clinical signs in animals

- Clinical signs are absent in early stages
- Advance stages: emaciation, weakness, anorexia, pneumonia with a chronic cough, dull coat colour
- Lymph nodes may be enlarged

Preventative measures

- Purchase tuberculosis negative animals
- Regular testing
- Remove sick animals from the herd

