

Lecture 3

Body temperature

The normal body temperature

The body can only work properly at a certain temperature. The animal body maintains itself at a constant temperature, within a small range, in order for the systems to work properly. This normal body temperature is different in different types of animals. There are a number of ways by which animals control the temperature of the body:

1. Hair, wool, walking, running, shivering and the burning of energy in feed keep the body warm.
2. Sweating, panting, wallowing in mud, and lying in the shade cool the body.

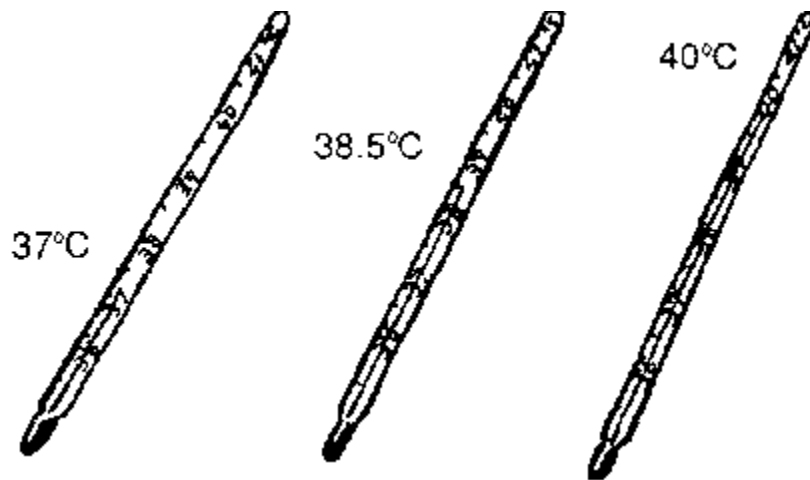
Measuring body temperature

We use a thermometer to measure the temperature of the body. The unit of measurement is degrees centigrade ($^{\circ}\text{C}$). The normal temperature of your body is 37°C . We measure the body temperature of animals by placing a thermometer in the anus.

The Thermometer

Look at your thermometer. Notice the silver line of the mercury inside it and the scale with numbers marked along it. Before you use it you must make sure that the mercury level is below 35°C . If it is not, shake the thermometer to make the level go down. Every time you use the thermometer clean it with cold water and soap or disinfect it afterwards. Do not wash the thermometer in hot water as this will burst it. Do not leave your thermometer in the sun as this may burst it. Carry the thermometer in a case in your pocket or bag. Do not use your veterinary thermometer for people.

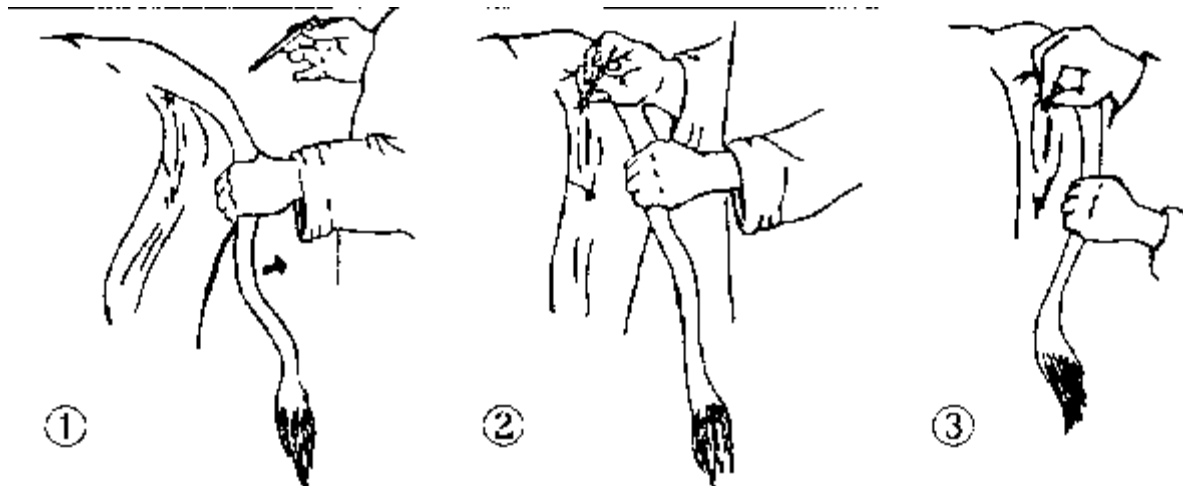
Thermometer



How to take the body temperature of animals

1. Control the animal.
2. Move the tail to the side.
3. Put the thermometer gently into the anus, as far as possible.
4. Hold the thermometer at an angle so that it touches the wall of the rectum. Keep a firm grip on the thermometer, if the animal defecates or coughs the thermometer could come out or go into the rectum.
5. Hold the thermometer in place for half a minute. If you do not have a watch count slowly up to 30 (one, two, three, thirty).
6. Remove the thermometer and wipe it if necessary and read it. Do not touch the bulb as this could change the reading.

How to take the body temperature of animals



Normal body temperatures

Animal	Normal Temperature °C	Normal Animal	Temperature °C
Cattle	38.5	Calf	39.5
Buffalo	38.2	Goat	39.5
Sheep	39.0	Camel*	34.5-41.0
Llama, alpaca	38.0	Horse	38.0
Donkey	38.2	Pig	39.0
Chicken	42.0	Piglet	39.8

Body temperatures may be 1°C above or below these temperatures.

* The camel's body temperature will vary with the time of day and water availability. When a camel is watered daily its body temperature rises from 36.5°C in the morning to 39.5°C at noon, if the animal has no water, the temperature range is 34.5°C to 41°C.

If you suspect that the animal has a high temperature use your thermometer to check it. Remember that a high temperature is one sign of ill health. When an animal has a high temperature it has a fever.