



It pays to replace on time!

by Rykie Visser, export and regional manager: DeLaval

The milking machine liner is the only part of the milking equipment that is in direct contact with the animal. The quality and characteristics of the liner greatly influences milking performance and animal health. It is very important to use the best possible liner type and to make sure you do not milk with old, worn liners.



You will not be able to see the bacteria that grow in the cracks of over-used liners

How long can a liner last?

A liner's lifespan depends on the following factors:

- The number of cows you milk every day
- How many times per day you milk the cows
- The number of clusters that you use to milk the cows.

Generally liners should be replaced every 2 500 milkings or six months, whatever comes first. Over their complete lifetime, liners should secure:

- Efficient milk extraction
- Gentle teat treatment
- High milk quality.

A liner collapses once every second it is used. Can you imagine how many times it collapses per month, just during milking? In its lifetime, a liner moves 1,5 million times and can handle 65 000 litres of milk!

Overuse of liners

It is crucial to replace all liners as a set when the lifespan is over. If one over-uses the liners, the following problems may occur:

- Clusters might slip down the teats during milking
- You will harvest less milk from the cows
- The cow's teats might penetrate too deep in the liner, and this will result in severe teat end damage, which can lead to mastitis
- The bacteria growth in the milk will be high, due to bacteria growing in the cracks that develop in the liners
- The liners will also lose its elasticity, resulting in incomplete milking practices
- You can also spread diseases like mastitis from one cow to the next by using old liners.



Use the correct liner at all times



The four rubber liners are the only connection between cow and machine

In short, over-used liners will lead to decreased milk-flow, extended milking time, reduced milk-yield and increased stripping. It will affect udder health and milk quality. Milking with over-used liners will reduce the milk volume by at least 4-5%!

These are only a few problems that might occur! The same applies to the milk tube. This tube has to be replaced once a year, regardless of the number of cows or number of times you milk the cows. A good practice is to replace all other rubber parts that are in contact with milk, also once a year.

What type of liner should you use?

Use original liners that you can buy as a set from the milking machine supplier, as these liners are manufactured for the specific cluster that you are using. Remember to replace liners according to the manufacturer's specifications. If you choose to use liners for longer than specified, be assured that you might end up culling cows due to spreading of diseases and injuries to the cow's teats!

A high capacity cluster liner will have the following features:

- High quality Nitrile rubber liner
- Patented
- Food approved
- Cog-wheel and shock absorber
- Three head-sizes for small, medium-sized and large teats
- For long and short teat cups.



If you need more information on liners and liner replacement, feel free to contact the author on cell 082 863 0364, fax 012 430 2819 or e-mail rykie.visser@delaval.com. **um**

It doesn't cost you to replace on time – it pays to do it!