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## **PIGEON RESPIRATORY DISEASE**

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### **Introduction**

Pigeons are well known carriers of respiratory diseases. Although some viruses also play a role it is especially Mycoplasmosis (*Mycoplasma gallisepticum*) and Ornithosis (*Chlamydophila*) that is most commonly seen.

### **Symptoms**

Many pigeons carry these organisms without showing any signs of disease and act as sources of infection for other healthy pigeons. Clinical symptoms may vary from slightly wet eyes, sneezing rubbing eyes on wings to severely swollen eyes with puss being excreted from the eyes. In most cases the opening of the windpipe will open and coes spasmodically when the bea is opened and pigeons are examined. Redness and inflammation of the throat is often seen. In some cases, the upper respiratory symptoms will spread to the lungs and pigeons will become short of breath and become severely exercise intolerant. Rarely pigeons will develop full blown pneumonia and die.

### **Differentiating The Two Diseases**

It is impossible to differentiate the two diseases by clinical examination. Very specific tests need to be done to confirm a diagnosis. Lately a new disease called Orniplasmosis is also being seen where both the above organisms combine to cause an intractable difficult to treat disease.

### **Treating Respiratory Diseases.**

Ideally pigeons should be tested, and the specific disease should be treated. As it is however not easy to confirm the organism responsible for causing the disease it is best to treat pigeons for both diseases. The two organisms need to be treated with different drugs to ensure effective treatment. It is recommended that pigeons be treated for 7 days with Spiradox. Spiradox contains Spiramycin and Doxycycline that is effective against both organisms. Mycoplasma will be eliminated with a 7-day treatment, but this is not enough to effectively treat Chlamydophila. It is thus imperative to carry on for 14 days directly after the spiradox treatment with Aviodox treatment. This will ensure that both diseases and even the combination of the two diseases is effectively treated. During the first 5 days of Spiradox treatment it is recommended that Avio-Bromhexine be added to the treatment as this increases the effectiveness of treatment. Routine addition of vitamins and immune stimulants according to the AvioMed program must be added to treatment. There is no need to remove grit from the pigeons during this treatment and pigeons may be raced once the first 7 days of treatment has been completed.