LOOK, LISTEN, AND FEEL: A LIFESAVER!

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LOOK, LISTEN, AND FEEL! Critical words and concepts you learn in first aid and CPR that are imperative to assess a person’s well being who’s been traumatized. LOOK at their position, complexion, vital visual signs; get close and LISTEN for airflow and breathing; and FEEL for a pulse which assures blood flow.

These same words are critical and are the basis for assessment and health of your milking equipment and routines. They can be a lifesaver and are often the difference between profitability and problems, as proper airflow and milk flow are as vital to milking equipment as air and blood flow is to humans.

➤ LOOK! (use your eyes to assess vital signs, including milk flow!)
   • Look to make sure teats, especially ends are clean and dry before putting milker unit on.
   • Look to see that milk gushes into the claw continuously once the unit is attached.
   • Look to see that milk moves as a fast slug through the milk hose! If slow, look for clogged bleed holes in claws/shells.
   • Look at all the rubber parts (inflations and hoses)! Are they worn out, cracked, kinked?
   • Look at your regulator? When’s the last time you cleaned the air filter?
   • Look at your vacuum gauge. Is it the same level every day? Does it fluctuate? When you turn the system off, does it go to zero?

➤ LISTEN! (use your ears to assess proper air flow!)
   • Listen to the air bleeding into your claws/shells. No noise means slow, poor milkout!
   • Listen to your pulsators. (better yet-take off an air hose and listen to the intermittent air bursts). They should be loud and crisp and all units the same. Critical for teat health!
   • Listen to your regulator! It should be letting in a lot of air (your air insurance policy!)
   • Listen for irregular air sounds! (leaks, cracks, tore inflations, etc). This is detrimental to equipment and cow health!

➤ FEEL! (use your fingers to assess proper unit function!)
   • Feel (put finger) on bleed holes. You should feel the suction!
   • Feel (put 4 fingers) in the inflations of each unit! Do they feel similar? Different? This tells vitals about inflations and pulsation functions (twisted, leaks, proper massage, etc.)

LOOK, LISTEN, AND FEEL – critical steps in lifesaving for humans and cows (milking time). But don’t wait until after the trauma occurs! Use your senses and these simple tools on a routine basis to assure healthy milking practices and equipment. Your cow’s and your livelihood depend on it!