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Chapter 32 - Molybdenum

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Abstract

Molybdenum is an essential nutrient in animals that functions as an oxygen transfer reaction in some body enzymes. Because molybdenum is required at very minimal amounts in the diet; deficiency has not been reported under natural conditions. Excessive molybdenum intake by way of high forage concentrations or oversupplementation can result in molybdenosis. Molybdenum poisoning is directly tied to dietary concentrations of molybdenum, copper and sulfur and the relative concentration ratios of copper to molybdenum. Most but not all of the clinical effects of molybdenosis are directly related to resultant overt or functional copper deficiencies. These deficiencies are the result of molybdenum being converted to thiomolybdates in the rumen by binding to sulfide and subsequently binding copper (producing cupric thiomolybdate complexes) to render it nonbioactive. These cupric thiomolybdate complexes can cause gastrointestinal and systemic loss of copper. Treatment entails the balancing of the copper: molybdenum ratio and potentially decreasing sulfur exposure.

Keywords

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