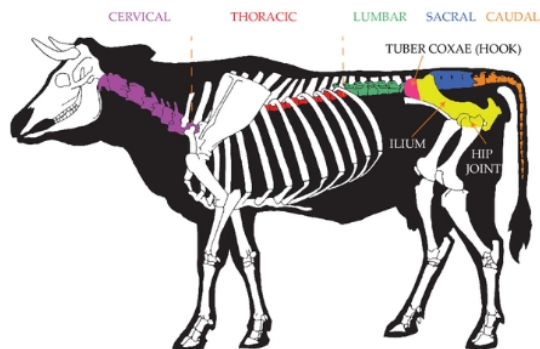


Management of the ?down cow?



The main reasons for a down cow generally are toxic, metabolic, or traumatic. The longer the cow is down, the worse the prognosis as damage to the leg muscles and nerves begins to occur.

Once the cause of the recumbency has been identified and treatment has been planned, the cow can be moved onto soft, clean bedding - Deep straw, sand (20cm minimum), or ideally out to grass if the weather allows. Have good quality feed and clean fresh water available at all times in a position the cow can easily access. Consider using non-steroidal anti-inflammatories

A hip hoist can be a useful tool to lift down cows to prevent them from suffering further injury. Ideally use a hip hoist along with a strap under the chest of the cow to take some of the weight. The hip hoist should be firmly attached around the tuber coxae (indicated in the diagram). Lift the cow slowly as vertically as possible with a loader until in a normal weight-bearing position. DO NOT lift the cow up in the air. Allow the cow to stand with the hoist on, if she won't weight bear then lower her down. Don't remove the hoist unless confident she is weight-bearing and won't stagger over.

All Red Tractor assured farms must now have a written plan in place for the management of down cows. Speak to your vet about making sure yours is upto date.

Img src: BCVA