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## Introduction

First seen in North America in 1951, turkey coronavirus enteritis is an acute and highly contagious disease of turkeys that caused significant losses in the 1950s and 60s. It is also known as bluecomb. It is a disease of the past that could make a return.

## The cause

This disease is caused by a turkey coronavirus. There are many coronavirus and infectious bronchitis and turkey coronavirus belong to antigenic group 3. The turkey coronavirus is closely related to infectious bronchitis virus. Turkey coronavirus has been isolated in the USA, Canada, Brazil, Italy, Poland, France, the UK and Australia.

## Transmission

Turkey corona virus is shed in the faeces of infected birds and spreads via the faeco-oral route. It spreads rapidly within and between flocks and between farms. Fomites include boots, vehicles, equipment and insects as well as dogs, vermin and wild birds. Turkey corona virus can be shed in the faeces of turkeys several weeks after they have recovered from the disease,

There is no evidence of vertical or transovarial transmission.

## Clinical signs

In the field, cases of turkey coronavirus enteritis occur quickly with high morbidities. Birds are depressed, have a reduced water intake, anorexic, dehydrated and have a watery diarrhoea. The droppings are green to brown in colour, watery, frothy and can contain urates and/or mucus. Infected flocks have depressed body weights, poor FCRs and high mortality. The actual mortality figure depends upon turkey age, the presence and type of co-infection and management factors.

In turkey breeders, turkey coronavirus infection causes a rapid egg drop with eggs lacking in pigmentation.

## Pathology

Lesions are in the intestines. The duodenum and jejunum are pale and flaccid and the caeca are distended and filled with watery contents.

Histologically changes are seen in cells of the bursa of Fabricius.