

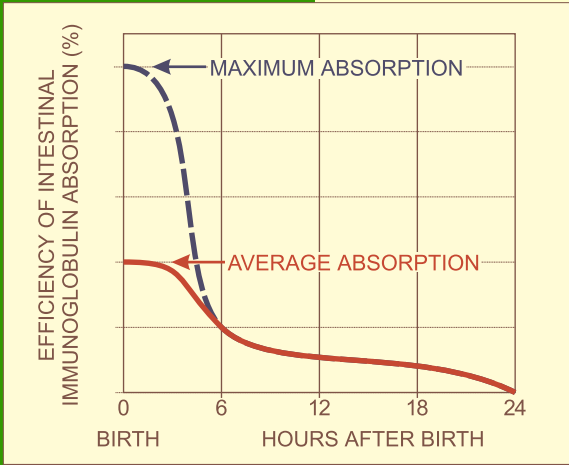
# Colostrum

Commonly defined as the secretions from the first 6 to 10 milkings of the cow, true colostrum is obtained only from the first milking. The secretions after the first milking and for 4-5 days after calving are

transition milk. By about the sixth milking, the composition of transition milk is similar to that of whole milk.

The appearance of colostrum is an indication of its quality. Good colostrum containing a high percentage of solids, and thus a high percentage of immunoglobulins, will be thick and creamy. Thin and watery colostrum is low in both solids and immunoglobulins. Use of a colostrometer can assure that colostrum quality is adequate. This device estimates solids content by measuring specific gravity. Good colostrum has a specific gravity above 1.05.

It is critical for the newborn calf to receive colostrum immediately after birth because of a rapid decline in the ability of the intestine to absorb immunoglobulins, as shown in the figure to the left.



for more information:

[Colostrum and The Newborn Calf](#), *the Progressive Calf Feeder*