

## Collection of blood - alpaca

Recommended instructor to student ratio: 1 instructor to 5 students

### Category

3. Minor conscious intervention

### Objective

To collect blood in a needle/syringe or negative pressure blood collection tube

### Alternatives to animal use

None

### Equipment

16 to 21 gauge needle and 3 to 20mL syringe or negative pressure blood collection tube

### Drugs, chemicals or biological agents

70% alcohol wipe at venipuncture site

### Procedure

An alpaca can be gently restrained with a neck hold in the crush (seated) or standing position. Fleece will be clipped from the region of the jugular vein. A site will need to be chosen and can be mid neck to high neck. Low neck possible but more difficult jugular vein access. The carotid artery is close to the jugular vein in the alpaca, but palpation of the vein is possible. It is not unusual or dangerous to sample from either vessel. A 70% alcohol wipe or swab is used to prepare the skin.

To take blood, place the thumb and extended forefinger of the non dominant hand against the neck and the jugular, beneath your collection site and with the dominant hand, use the needle and syringe (or negative pressure blood collection tube) to insert into the vein, for blood collection.

Using a 16 to 21 gauge needle and 3-20 mL syringe is easiest with the slim necks of alpaca, depending on the maturity of the animal and palpation of jugular size.

Dispose of the needle in a dedicated sharps container.

### Impact on wellbeing of animals

Low impact, unless excessive volumes of blood are taken. Damage to the jugular vein or inadvertent carotid artery collection may result in a haematoma, that can be controlled.

### Animal Care

Hold the neck gently as it is long and does not require firm restraint.

One animal for each blood sampling per session – do not keep repeating blood collections to maximum volume in one session.

Up to 4 attempts to collect blood before aborting procedure for that session.

### Pain Relief

None required

### Qualification, experience or training necessary to perform procedure

Demonstrator: Proficient at locating jugular vein and differentiating from carotid artery (though not dangerous if collected from this region)