

## Utah State University Market Goat First Aid, Basic Care, and Common Diseases in Show Goats


**Instructions:** Print this page on cardstock, and laminate it to ensure resilience over time and to allow a dry erase marker to be used to indicate how much of each supply you have in stock. Cut out each card, and punch a hole in the upper left-hand corner and attach with a loose-leaf ring. Keep with your first-aid kit, in a location near your goats.

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# Market Goat First Aid, Basic Care, and Common Diseases in Show Goats

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### Primary Vet Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Backup Vet Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Emergency Contact 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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### First Aid On Hand

- \_\_\_ Adhesive tape
- \_\_\_ Antiseptic scrub
- \_\_\_ Disposable latex gloves
- \_\_\_ Disposable razor
- \_\_\_ Duct tape
- \_\_\_ Epsom salt
- \_\_\_ Flash light
- \_\_\_ Gauze dressing pads
- \_\_\_ Hoof dressing
- \_\_\_ Isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol
- \_\_\_ Lubricant for the thermometer
- \_\_\_ Nonsteroidal eye ointment
- \_\_\_ Oral syringe
- \_\_\_ Pocket knife
- \_\_\_ Safety scissors

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- \_\_\_ Scissors
- \_\_\_ Tweezers
- \_\_\_ Udder ointment
- \_\_\_ Vet wrap
- \_\_\_ Wound ointment/spray
- \_\_\_ Wire cutters
- \_\_\_ Kaopectate or Pepto
- \_\_\_ Probiotics
- \_\_\_ Electrolites
- \_\_\_ Ammonia chloride
- \_\_\_ 3cc and 12cc syringes
- \_\_\_ 18g x 1" and 22g x 1" needles
- \_\_\_ Thermometer
- \_\_\_ Hoof trimers
- \_\_\_ Fly spray
- \_\_\_ Rectal thermometer
- \_\_\_ Roll gauze

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### **CHECKING VITALS:**

#### **Temperature** (degrees in F)

Adult- 100.4-103.1°, Newborn- 101-103°

How to take the temperature-

- Put animal in a/restraint (or tie securely to a fence, etc.) where you can guarantee that the animal will not be able to cause harm to you or move resulting in an injury to it.
- Lubricate the end of the thermometer.
- Lift the tail and gently insert the thermometer into the rectum. Make sure the tip of the thermometer rests against the rectal wall (i.e., make sure it is not inserted into feces).

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- Hold the end of the thermometer to stop it from disappearing into the rectum.
- Electronic thermometers will “beep” when an accurate reading is obtained.

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#### **Pulse Rate**

(beats per minute)

Adults- 12-20, Kids- 20-40.

How and where to take pulse-

1. Locate an artery (the external Maxillary Artery crosses the lower edge of the jaw) and apply gentle pressure against it with your fingers.
2. Count the number of pulses for 1 full minute; or for 30 seconds, and multiply the number by two; or for 15 seconds and multiply by 4.

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### Respiration

(breaths per minute)

Adults- 12-20, Kids- 20-40.

1. Watch flank of animal for inhale and exhale.
2. Determine if your animal's respiration is normal or abnormal.
3. Respiration can be increased by recent exercise, excitement, stress, hot weather or stuffy buildings.
4. Respiration can be accelerated if the animal is in pain or has a fever



### Prevention of Disease through Management Vaccination Programs

#### Overview

The management of disease in meat goats is typically conducted via some type of vaccination program. Vaccinations should be given at multiple time points in an animals life to decrease the probability of infection later in the production process. For example, animals should be vaccinated prior to weaning as this is a stressful time in their lives and can suppress the immune system.



Furthermore, animals remaining in the herd should be vaccinated annually and animals transitioning to a new phase or environment of the production system should be vaccinated to prevent becoming infected themselves or infecting new animals that they might be exposed to. Although there are multiple vaccinations available on the market to prevent disease it is always a good idea to consult a veterinarian on the best type of vaccine for your herd/area and how to properly administer the vaccine so that the vaccine is most effective at preventing disease.



### Common Diseases and Disorders in Goats

#### Overview

Although prevention and management are the best way to decrease the probability of infection in our meat animals, there are still instances where animals become infected. This may be due to exposure to a strain of the disease that was not covered in the vaccine, genetic predisposition or just plain bad luck. As such the following information is necessary to be able to identify these diseases early and obtain the proper treatment for the animal so that the infection does not progress and create a much larger issue.



## Coccidiosis, Coccidian

### Overview

Coccidia Coccidiosis is a parasite infection caused by the protozoan organism coccidia (also known as cocci or by the scientific name, Eimeria). Some species of Eimeria are non-pathogenic, meaning they do not cause disease. Eimeria are host-specific, which means that an Eimeria species that affect goats will not affect sheep or cattle, and vice versa.

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## Signs/Symptoms

Coccidiosis includes signs of diarrhea or pasty feces with or without mucus or blood, loss of condition, general frailness, weakness, emaciation, and failure to grow. In peracute cases, kids may die without clinical signs. Chronic coccidiosis is one of the main causes of poor growth in kids.

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## Diagnosis and Treatment-

Eradication is not feasible, but infection can be controlled through good management practices. When symptoms are detected, contact a veterinarian immediately. The veterinarian will prescribe the necessary antibiotic along with dosage and the number of days to administer to goat.

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## Urinary Calculi

### Overview-

Calculi results from mineral deposits in the urinary tract, resulting in a blockage of the flow of urine. The blockage may rupture the urinary bladder, resulting in a condition known as waterbelly, and cause death.

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### Signs/Symptoms

Difficult and painful urination is evidenced by straining, slow urination, stomping of the feet, and kicking at the area of the penis. Blockage of the flow of urine generally is seen only in intact or castrated males. It is common when diets with high concentrations of cereal grains are fed (market goats, pet goats, etc.). Affected animals excrete an alkaline urine that has a high phosphorus content.

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### Diagnosis and Treatment

When symptoms are detected, contact a veterinarian immediately. The veterinarian will prescribe the necessary antibiotic along with dosage and the number of days to administer to goat.

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### Enterotoxemia (Overeating Disease)

#### Overview

Enterotoxemia is a frequently severe disease in goats of all ages. It is caused by two strains of bacteria called *Clostridium perfringens* – the strains are termed types C and D. These bacteria are normally found in low numbers in the gastrointestinal tract of all sheep and goats.

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### Signs and Symptoms

The animal may abruptly go off of feed and become lethargic. Affected animals may show signs of stomach pain, such as kicking at their belly, repeatedly laying down and getting up, lying on their sides, panting, and crying out. Diarrhea may develop; in some cases, there is blood visible in the loose stool. Animals may lose the ability to stand. They lie on their sides, and extend their legs, with their head and neck extended back over their withers.

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This posture is caused by the effects of the toxins on the brain. Death commonly occurs within minutes to hours after this sign is seen. Because enterotoxemia can progress so quickly, animals may be found dead with no previous signs of disease.



### **Treatment**

When symptoms are detected, contact a veterinarian. The veterinarian will prescribe the necessary antibiotic along with dosage and the number of days to administer to goat.



In mild cases, treatment may not be necessary. Softening ointments may help in more severe cases. It is important to make sure that affected animals are eating and drinking. Soft, palatable feeds may help to keep intake up. Antibiotics may be required if secondary infections are severe. Commercial vaccines labeled for both goats and sheep are available and have been of value in some instances.



### **Antibiotic Introduction**

The introduction and use of antimicrobials in animals has brought major benefits to both animals and humans. Some of these benefits are:

1. Reduction of animal pain and suffering due to reduction in illness symptoms.
2. Protection of livelihood and animal resources.
3. Assurance of continuous production of foods of animal origin.



4. Prevention or minimizing shedding of zoonotic bacteria into the environment and the food chain.
5. Containment of potentially large-scale epidemics that could result in severe loss of animal and human lives.



### Antibiotic Withdrawal Periods

All antibiotics will have a “withdrawal period” on the label. Be sure to refer to that before administering the drug. A withdrawal period is the time necessary for an animal to metabolize the drug administered to a safe, acceptable level. All antibiotics are labeled with instructions on withdrawal time, dosage, and method of injection. If followed, the risk of antibiotic residues is greatly reduced.



### Treatments

Parasites are one of the leading causes of death among goats. A good parasite control program is not simply deworming, but also management practices to reduce the number of parasites the animals are exposed to. Grain and hay should be fed in troughs high enough to prevent fecal contamination. The drug class of the dewormer should be rotated yearly and/or as needed to help reduce drug resistance, which is a serious problem for goat producers. Your veterinarian and/or Extension agent can help in this decision.



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