

## PITFALLS FOR THE BEGINNER TO AVOID

1. The Dud. Buy from someone you trust. If you lack close friends who raise goats, join your local goat club and make several. Do Not buy a goat from a stranger.

2. Dogs. All goats want out. Two want out less than one, so buy two. Electric fences keep goats in but they will not keep dogs out. A half-dozen miniature poodles can kill an adult goat if they gang up on her. Install good tight woven wire fences 4 1/2 feet high, and do not let your own dogs out with your goats unsupervised.

3. Extra Baggage. Bucks and horns on your goats do not belong in the novice goatkeepers's herd, and the reasons are pretty apparent. The former are a lot of trouble, and the latter are dangerous. Also, pet goats (wethers, old does, and cripples) have a way of multiplying. If your too softhearted to eat your pet wether, sell it to someone who is not. You would not keep a pet steer, would you? Be sensible and try some chevon.

4. Biting Off More Than You Can Chew. It is a poor idea to practice on a milking doe. For your first goats, a couple of young doelings would be ideal. By the time they freshen you will have learned a lot about them. Take it slowly and do not let your enthusiasm get out of hand.

5. Illness. It can not be avoided entirely, but those who practice preventative medicine have less, and it is less serious when it does happen. Ask your veterinarian what vaccines and wormers he/she recommends, and ask some breeders about vitamin-mineral supplements, management tips etc. If you start with good stock, vaccinate regularly, feed correctly, and are quick to notice changes in appearance and habits, and seek help, serious illness will be rare.

6. Economizing on Feed. Don't. But only the best hay you can get of a type recommended by people who raise dairy goats in your area, and feed as much as your does want. Stick to a grain formulated specifically for dairy goats. Find out how much grain to feed according to milk production needs. If you do not, your goats will be unhealthy and will not produce milk economically.

7. Lack of Preparation. Do not get caught short. Find out from experienced hands what you will need in the way of feeders, buckets, strainers, veterinary supplies, etc., and have it all ready before you need them.

8. Ignorance. It cannot be totally avoided. You can, however, get past the awkward novice stage rapidly and with a minimum of pain. Join your local goat club and go to all the meetings. Visit dairies and breeding farms and ask lots of questions. Go to shows. Get to know your veterinarian. Listen. Watch. Buy books and subscribe to magazines. How fast you learn is up to you.

9. Experimentation. Until you have had a lot of experience, leave this to wiser hands. A dairy animal is a very complex mechanism and the slightest error in feeding or management can have serious results. Just to give an example, both too-fat and the too-thin doe are susceptible to Ketosis, a very nasty disease that kills a lot of goats. Follow your vet's orders, and read all of the many fine books and magazines you are collecting.

**A FEW TIPS FOR DOE\*OWNERS  
WHO PLAN TO VISIT BREEDERS FOR BUCK SERVICE**

1. Plan ahead of time what buck you intend to use. A breeder advertising bucks of the breed you wish to use will usually be willing to help you make your choice.
2. Make arrangements well ahead of time with the breeder. Give him a general idea when your doe will be ready. Ask first about fees, health certificate requirements, etc.
3. Call the breeder again just before setting out with your doe. Do not arrive unexpectedly
4. If your doe has a long travel time to reach the buck, give her a few minutes to observe calls of nature and to calm down before approaching the buck.
5. Be sure your doe's feet are well trimmed before you take her to the buck. She needs good stance to support his weight while he is covering her.
6. Be sure your doe is healthy and free from parasites before taking her into another herd.
7. If your doe will not stand the first time you take her, go home with a buck rag in a tightly closed jar. Hang the rag where the doe can sniff it -- you will know for sure when she's ready the next time: she will go ape over the rag.
8. If your doe does not settle the first time she is serviced, (if she comes into season again), the breeder should allow you a second breeding with his/her buck. If she fails to settle a second time, and evidence shows that the buck has settled other does, have your doe checked by a veterinarian. If the problem is with your doe, the breeder does not owe you a refund. If the problem is with the buck, he should be willing to let you use a different buck or refund your money.

## Helpful Measurements and Terminology

1cc = 1ml

5cc = 5ml = 1 teaspoon

30ml = 1 fluid ounce

500ml = 16 ounces = 1 pint

1T = 1/2 fluid ounce = 15ml

1kg = 2.2 pounds (100# = 45kg.)

Goat milk gallon weighs 8.6 lbs.

Twice per day = bid

Three times per day = tid

Four times per day = qid

Every day = qd

Every other day = qod

---

### Normal Goat Vital Signs

- **Pulse :** 70-80/minute (adult) 100-120/minute (kid)
- **Respiration:** 9-15/minute (adult) 12-20/minute kid)
- **Temperature:** 101.5-104 degrees F
- **Rumen Contractions** - observe in left flank 1-3/minute

# Goat Health Assessment Tool

When you are faced with a possible **health concern** in your goat, you should call your veterinarian immediately. By reviewing **the below** health assessment tool you can provide your vet with valuable information regarding **the current** health status of your goat.

At minimum, try to have a temperature **taken** on the animal *before* calling your vet with the list of symptoms you are concerned about. **Body** temperature gives a good clinical picture immediately as to what could be going on **with** the goat.

- Overall presentation and attitude of the goat / general appearance
- Temperature (normal 101.5- 104)
- Respiratory Rate (9-15 breathes per minute in the adult goat)
- Pulse (70-80 beats per minute in the adult goat)
- Color of inner, lower eyelid - pink? white?
- Color of gums- pink? white?
- Eyes – clear? discharge? If discharge, note color. clear? cloudy? green?
- Nose – clear? runny? If drainage, note color. Clear? white? yellow? Green?
- Mouth- clear of obstruction? frothy?
- Sound of Breathing – cough? If so...dry? wet?
- Rumen Contractions – listen with ear against flank, feel, watch upper left flank, cud chewing?
- Eliminating normally? – urinating? Straining to urinate? diarrhea? Unusual color or odor of diarrhea if present.
- Coat – shiny? dull? rough? Do you see any small parasites?
- Legs - animal moving freely? limping?
- Hooves- hot? recently trimmed?
- Examine for lumps or bumps -check throat, neck, shoulder, flank
- Social- is she standing off by herself?

## **Goat (Caprine) Terminology:**

(Author: "GoatWorld.com") *Used with Permission.*

**Abomasum:** The fourth or true digestive part of a ruminant's stomach that contains gastric juices and enzymes that begin the breakdown of complex materials.

**Abortifacients:** A drug or other agent used to cause abortion. Other agents could be considered as toxins or poisons from plants, trees, etc.

**Acidosis:** A condition when the rumen becomes too acid. Usually due to over-consumption of grain.

**Artificial Rearing:** Raising a kid on milk or milk replacer.

**Banding:** This involves the use of castration rings (bands) to remove the testicles.

**Billy:** Male goat; frequently used to describe an older, adult male goat - non wether.

**Body Condition Score:** A value from 1-5 (thin to fat) used to estimate condition of an animal.

**Bolus:** A large oval shaped pill containing antibiotics.

**Bots:** Tiny larvae that crawl into nasal passages.

**Breeding Season:** The period of time when the doe is showing estrus.

**Brood Doe:** A doe kept for the purpose of continuing a desirable bloodline and genetics in her offspring.

**Browse:** Broad-leaved woody plant, shrub or brush.

**Brucellosis:** Infection with bacteria of the Brucella group, frequently causing abortions in animals and remittent fever in man. Also called Undulant fever, Malta fever, or Mediterranean fever.

**Buck:** Male goat.

**Buckling:** Baby male goat.

**Burdizzo:** Tool used to castrate bucks by severing the cord without breaking the skin of the scrotum.

**Butting:** Method of fighting among goats (especially bucks) by the striking of the head and horns.

**CAE:** Caprine Arthritic Encephalitis, a goat virus alot like AIDS in humans.

**Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio:** Relative amounts of calcium and phosphorus in the total ration. Usually recommended to be at least 2:1.

**CC:** Cubic Centimeter, same as ML; 3CC and 3ML are the same thing in shots.

**Chlamydia:** Small organisms associated with pneumonia, abortion, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, arthritis and encephalitis.

**Chlamydiosis:** Type of infectious abortion.

**CL:** Caseous Lymphadenitis, an abscess disease of goats that is highly contagious.

**Cloning:** The production of genes or individuals which are genetically the same as the donor.

**Clostridial Organisms:** Anaerobic bacteria that produce spores under certain conditions.

**Cocci:** An oxycyt that destroys the lining of the small intestine causing diarrhea and death; (also known as coccidiosis)

**Coccidiosis:** An oxycyt that destroys the lining of the small intestine causing diarrhea and death; (also known as cocci)

**Colostrum:** The first milk full of antibodies for the kids, essential to their life.

**Corpus luteum:** A ductless gland developed within the ovary by the reorganization of a Graafian follicle following ovulation. Also known as an extract of this gland of the hog or cow, the chief principle of which is progesterone. plural = corpora lutea.

**Corticosteroids:** Any of a class of steroids, as aldosterone, hydrocortisone, or cortisone, occurring in nature as a product of the adrenal cortex, or synthesized. Also called corticoid.

**Critical Temperature:** Maximum or minimum environmental temperature tolerated by the animal before additional dietary energy is required to maintain normal body temperature.

**Crossbred:** The offspring resulting from mating a buck and doe of different breeds.

**Crossbreeding:** Mating plan involving two or more breeds.

**Cryptosporidiosis:** An organism that proliferates in the small intestine.

**Culling:** The process of removing animals that are below average in production, unsound or undesirable.

**Culls:** Goats which are below a required standard.

**Custom Feeding:** The practice of having livestock fed and managed for the livestock owner in another facility for a fee.

**Cysticercosis:** The condition where a larval form of a tapeworm has encysted or embedded itself in the tissue of its host.

**Dam:** The mother

**Dehydrate:** The loss of body fluids by fever, virus or heat.

**Disbudding:** The practice of removing the horns on a goat.

**Doe:** Female goat.

**Doeling:** Baby female goat.

**Drenching:** The oral administration of medication.

**Drylot:** A penned area for holding the herd for an extended period with or without housing.

**Dry Matter:** (DM) The portion of feed that is not water.

**Elastrator:** Instrument used to apply heavy rubber bands (elastrator rings/bands) to tail and scrotum for docking and castration. Some breeders also used this method for disbudding.

**Embryo Transfer:** Recently fertilized eggs from donor doe are transferred to the uterus of a recipient doe, usually by surgically exposing the uterus of the recipient.

**Emaciation:** To waste away physically.

**Encephalitis:** Inflammation of the brain usually with severe signs such as fever, incoordination, and convulsions.

**Enteritis:** An inflammation of the intestinal tract.

**Enterotoxemia:** Actually misnamed "overeaters", it is a toxin in all healthy goats, that multiplies with a stressor to cause stomach cramps and death.

**Enterotoxemia Type C:** Disease that affects goats in the first two weeks of life causing bloody infection of the small intestine and rapid death.

**Enterotoxemia Type C and D Toxoid:** Vaccination given to young goats to build up antibodies against Enterotoxemia type C and D. It is also available combined with tetanus vaccination.

**Enterotoxemia Type D:** Disease that affects unvaccinated goats that have been placed on high energy diets.

**Entropion:** A heritable trait in which the lower eyelid is inverted, causing the eyelashes of the lower lid to brush against the eye.

**Esophageal Feeder:** Tube placed down the esophagus of a goat to administer milk or other liquid.

**Estrogen Hormone:** that causes regression of the corpus luteum and stimulates estrus.

**Estrous Cycle:** The time period from beginning of one heat to the beginning of the next heat. Usually about 16-17 days.

**Estrus:** The period of time when the female is sexually receptive to the male, Usually 24-36 hours, also known as "heat".

**External Parasite:** Parasites that may be found on the hair, skin and in the nasal and ear passages.

**Flight Zone:** Maximum zone of comfort or security of animals.

**Flushing:** Management practice of improving a doe's plan of nutrition just prior to mating to improve ovulation rate.

**Foot Bath:** Chemical and water mixture, that goats stand in, used for the prevention and/or treatment of foot rot and foot scald.

**Forage:** Fiber-containing feedstuffs such as silage, hay and pasture.

**Forcing Pen:** Pen used to confine animals prior to moving them into treatment chutes.

**Freshen:** To come into milk.

**Gambrel Restrainer:** Restraining device that is a gambrel-shaped piece of plastic that is placed over the top of the animal's neck, with slots on either side to hold both front legs of the animal.

**Gastroenteritis:** An inflammation of the stomach and intestines.

**Gestation:** Period of pregnancy beginning at conception and ending with birth (142-152 days).

**Grafting:** Fostering a kid onto a doe that is not its natural mother.

**Group Fed:** Feeding system where all animals in a group are fed at one time.

**Guard Dog:** A dog that stays with the goats without harming them and aggressively repels predators.

**Hypocalcemia:** Low levels of calcium in the blood.

**Hypomagnesemia:** Low levels of magnesium in the blood.

**Hypothermia:** Inability to keep warm often caused by cold or wet weather.

**IM:** Intramuscularly, in the muscle shot.

**Intermediate Host:** An animal or other living body in which a parasite completes part of its life cycle and usually causes no damage.

**Internal Parasites:** Parasites located in the stomach, lungs and intestines of goats.

**International Unit (IU):** Unit of measurement of vitamins and drugs.

**Iodine:** Disinfectant used on navels of newborn goats that helps dry up the navel, thus closing the passageway into the body of the goat. Also applied to hooves of newborns by some breeders. Veterinary iodine contains 7% iodine while common iodine for humans contains 2% iodine.

**Johnes:** A wasting disease of ruminants, contagious in their fecal matter (poop).

**Keds:** Bloodsucking ticks that pierce the skin causing serious damage to the pelts.

**Ketones:** Compounds found in the blood of pregnant goats suffering from pregnancy toxemia.

**Known Carrier:** An animal that has produced offspring with a genetic defect.

**Kid(s):** Baby goats, either sex.

**Kidding:** Having babies.

**Lactation:** The period of time when the doe is producing milk. Normally from birth of kid to weaning.

**Lactated Ringers Solution:** Used for adding body fluids to a dehydrated goat (known as LRS).

**Legumes:** Family of plants bearing seeds in a pod.

**Liver Flukes:** Small leaf-shaped organisms that roll up like a scroll in the bile ducts or liver tissue.

**Loading Chute:** A chute used for loading animals into a truck or trailer.

**Lochia:** The dark blood discharge a doe has for several weeks after kidding.

**LRS:** Used for adding body fluids to a dehydrated goat (known as Lactated Ringers Solution).

**Lungworms:** Roundworms found in the respiratory tract and lung tissue.

**Mange Mites:** Mites which infest and damage the skin and hair.

**Manure:** Poop, nanny berries, fecal matter, excrement.

**Mastitis:** Inflammation of the mammary gland caused by bacterial infection, resulting in reduced milk production.

**Milk Replacer:** Artificial milk substitute fed to young goats.

**Mineral:** Inorganic substance found naturally in all body cells, tissues and fluids.

**ML:** Milliliter, same as CC; 3CC and 3ML are the same thing in shots.

**Nanny:** A mother goat; infrequently used depending upon your location.

**Natural Immunity:** Inherited resistance to disease that varies between breeds, strains within breeds and individuals.

**Necropsy:** Examination of a dead animal to determine cause of death.

**Nitrate Poisoning:** Condition in which toxic levels of nitrates accumulate in plants.

**Nose Bots:** Tiny larvae that crawl into nasal passages.

**Omasum:** The third part of the ruminant stomach located between the reticulum and the abomasum.

**Oocyst:** A stage in the life of coccidia (a protozoal parasite) that is shed in manure. Goats become infected by ingesting oocysts from contaminated pastures.

**Orifice:** The hole in the end of a teat.

**Over the Counter Drugs (OTC):** Drugs that can be purchased directly by the producer.

**Parasite:** An organism that lives off of a host.

**Parturition:** The act of bringing forth young; childbirth.

**Pinkeve:** A highly contagious disease that affects the eyes of goats (also contagious to humans).

**Placenta:** The big membrane that the doe expels after kidding.

**Pregnancy Toxemia:** A metabolic disease of pregnant does generally caused by diet deficient in energy during late pregnancy.

**Protein:** Nitrogen-based essential nutrient, composed of chains of amino acids, that is present in all living things.

**Protein Supplement:** Feedstuff that contain a high level of protein. Fed to animals in addition to their base diet.

**Ration:** A mixture of feedstuffs fed to animals.

**Rehydrate:** The addition of body fluids which have been lost from fever, illness, heat, etc.

**Reticulo-Rumen:** Section of the ruminant gastrointestinal tract consisting of the reticulum and the rumen that is the primary site for microbial fermentation of feedstuffs.

**Roughage:** Coarse, bulky feed high in fiber such as hay, straw and silage.

**Rumen:** The large first compartment of a ruminant's stomach containing microbial population that is capable of breaking down forages and roughages.

**Rumen-Reticulum:** Pregastric fermentation chamber that host a large microbial population.

**Ruminant :** A group of animals that chew their cud and characteristically have a four compartment stomach.

**Rumination:** The process of regurgitating food to be rechewed.

**Scours:** Diarrhea usually only associated with incorrect milk feeding.

**Silage:** Green forage converted to a succulent feed of 30% - 40% dry matter for goats by storing without air (as in silo or air-tight bags).

**Sire:** The father.

**Soremouth:** A highly contagious (also to humans), viral infection that causes scabs around mouth, nostrils, eyes and may effect udders of lactating does.

**SubQ Subcutaneous:** under the skin shot (sometimes written as SQ or sq).

**Synchronization:** A management practice used to cause the goats to cycle at the same time.

**Systemic Disease:** A disease where more than one portion of the body is affected; often the whole body or one or more systems.

**Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN):** Standard system for expressing the energy value of feeds.

**Trace Minerals (TM):** Minerals that are required in very small amounts.

**Urinary Calculi:** Metabolic disease of male lambs characterized by the formation of stones within the urinary tract. It is caused primarily by an imbalance of dietary calcium and phosphorus.

**Vaccination:** Injection, given to healthy animals, used to stimulate prolonged immunity to specific diseases.

**Vaginal Prolapse:** Protrusion of the vagina in does in late pregnancy.

**Vitamins:** Small organic compounds, necessary for proper metabolism, that are found in feed in minute amounts. Deficiencies result in distinct diseases or syndromes.

**Wether:** Castrated male.

**White Muscle Disease:** A disease caused by a deficiency of selenium, Vitamin E or both that causes degeneration of skeletal and cardiac muscles of goats.

**Yearling:** A one year old goat.