Goat Health Tips

Goat temperature?
102°-103°F

A goat's normal temperature is 102°F to 103°F. If you have a sick goat, the first thing you should do is take its temperature. If the temperature is above normal, there's probably an infection. Antibiotics might help. Below normal temperature could mean a critically ill animal. If the temperature is normal, that's important information too.

Be sure you take your goat's temperature before calling the veterinarian for advice about a sick goat. Your vet will probably ask what the goat's temperature is.

"Off feed" and grinding teeth
Eating should be the primary interest in any goat's life. If the goat stops eating normally, the animal is probably sick. Going "off feed" is one of the few ways a goat can tell you it does not feel well.

Teeth grinding is also a sign of illness in goats. You can easily hear this unpleasant noise and can tell that the goat is uncomfortable and needs your attention.

Skin problems
Roundish hairless patches on a goat's body are often caused by a ringworm fungus. Clean the skin with a mild antiseptic soap and then apply Fungisan Liquid, a mixture of equal parts of glycerin and tincture of iodine, or household bleach diluted 1 part in 10 parts water daily.

Abscesses
Contagious abscesses caused by Corynebacterium ovis are spread by contact with pus from a draining "lump." If the bacteria gets into lymph nodes, the goat may develop new abscesses for months or years to come. Abscesses can also grow on internal organs and kill the goat. External abscesses are ugly, but the goat may stay in good health otherwise. Occasional abscesses will develop inside the udder; milk should not be used for humans.

There is no cure. A good program of cleaning the ripe abscess and isolating the goat can reduce the incidence of abscesses in the herd. Autogenous vaccines have worked well for some breeders, but may perform best if the animals are vaccinated three or four times a year.

Abscesses may also be caused by imbedded foreign particles or small cuts infected with Staphylococcus, C. pyogenes, etc. These abscesses are not a contagious herd problem.

Worms are common
Worms cause many problems in goat herds. Regular worming is usually necessary. A veterinarian can check fecal samples to tell you exactly what kinds of worms your goats have and what wormers you should be using. You may need to use a different wormer each time you worm to keep these parasites under control.

Coccidiosis kills kids
Coccidiosis is much more common in goat herds than many breeders or their veterinarians may realize. Coccidiosis often causes persistent scouring in kids. Adult goats may also carry heavy coccidia infestations. Have your vet check a fecal sample microscopically to find out if your goat has "coccidiosis." We sell Corid Amprolium which can be used both to treat and help prevent coccidiosis.

Routine "shots" for goats
Vaccinations against tetanus and enterotoxemia are widely used by goat breeders. Selenium (Bo-Se), available from your vet, may be given in herds where this mineral is deficient. Injections of Vitamins A & D are often used if the goats have problems with contagious abscesses, an autogenous vaccine can be prepared from material collected from your herd. It can help control the abscess problems and seems to work best if the animals are vaccinated every four months. Chlamydia has caused abortions, arthritis, and pneumonia in goat herds. Some breeders are using an experimental chlamydia vaccine from Fort Dodge Labs with good results. Some East Coast breeders use a corynebacterium pasteurella vaccine to stop respiratory and diarrhea problems in their kids.

Your veterinarian may suggest other vaccinations (such as leptos) which you should use because of specific problems with goats or other livestock in your area.

Causes of abortion
Abortions are common in some goat herds. They are usually caused by an infectious organism such as chlamydia that causes many first-freshening does to abort
or give birth prematurely, while older does are immune. Salmonella, toxoplasmosis, vibriosis, and other organisms have also been suspected in goat abortions. Severe butting, which may happen when a new doe is introduced into a herd, can also cause abortions.

Pneumonia problems
Goats are very susceptible to pneumonia and respiratory problems.

They need shelter from rain and protection from drafts, but the wrong kind of shelter can be bad. Barns that are poorly ventilated, with a strong ammonia odor in the air and damp bedding, are unhealthy for goats. The viruses that cause pneumonia spread rapidly in such a setting.

Brucellosis and tuberculosis

The U.S. Animal Health Association has recommended that it is no longer necessary to test goats for brucellosis in the United States. They feel the U.S. is free from B. melitensis, which infects goats. There have been no cases of brucellosis in goats for many years, although the disease is known in cattle, hogs, and even dogs.

Tuberculosis is all but unknown in goats, also. Testing is still recommended in areas which are not TB-free, but this disease is not usually a goat health problem.

Just to be safe, most goat owners test for TB and brucellosis regularly, especially if the milk is to be used for human consumption.

Soremouth

This highly contagious disease causes ugly sores on the mouth area of goats. Make sure goats keep eating. When they recover, they will have lifetime immunity. Vaccination is not recommended unless you actually have the disease in your herd because the vaccine is “live” (it will infect your premises). Vaccination program (when followed rigorously) has helped clean up herds with soremouth.

If the virus gets into a cut on your hand, you too will probably get sore-mouth, so protect yourself. Also, don’t let infected kids nurse does; the udders may get infected, with painful results.

Provided By the South Carolina Meat Goat Association

SIMPLE GOAT DUE-DATE ESTIMATOR

To determine the due date, take breeding date and subtract the number indicated in the table. For example, if bred July 4, the doe will kid December 1. If bred November 10, the doe will be due April 9. Does bred February 18? Look for "Bred in February" and then look across to when she is due "July" and subtract the minus number "0" from the date number "18" when she was bred. So, doe is due July 18. This is based on 150 days.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bred in July</th>
<th>due December-3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bred in August</td>
<td>due January-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bred in September</td>
<td>due February-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bred in October</td>
<td>due March-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bred in November</td>
<td>due April-1</td>
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<td>Bred in December</td>
<td>due May-1</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bred in January</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Bred in March</td>
<td>due August-3</td>
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<td>Bred in April</td>
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<td>Bred in May</td>
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<td>Bred in June</td>
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