

## Pink Eye or Infectious Keratoconjunctivitis

### What are the symptoms of pink eye?

- Symptoms of pink eye are watering of the eyes, redness of the whites of the eye and eyelids, swelling of the eyelids, and squinting to keep the sun out.
- Later on, the cornea (clear part of the eye) becomes cloudy and blood vessels may grow across it. Sometimes an ulcer or a pit will develop on the cornea. The ulcer can rupture and cause blindness.
- The eyes will heal in 1 to 4 weeks, depending on cause and severity. In one type of pink eye, kids develop a high fever and severe lameness. This disease is not included in a guide.

### What are the causes and transmission of pink eye?

- Various organisms, including bacteria, viruses, rickettsia, and Chlamydia, cause infections of the eye with symptoms that may be classed as pink eye.
- These organisms are transmitted by contact with infected goats or insects carrying the organisms from goat to goat, or by irritation from dust or other sources that can cause scratches or injury to the eye.

### What are the treatment and prevention of pink eye?

- Injections of antibiotics, such as tetracycline or tylosin or use of oxytetracycline eye ointments, seems to help.
- LA200 or equivalent doesn't always work as well as the oxytetracycline ointment.

- Put the ointment in the eye (not outside the eyelid – start at the front corner) several times per day until an improvement is observed.
- Clean your fingers between goats, otherwise you may spread the pink eye organisms from one goat to the other.
- Healing usually requires one (1) to four (4) weeks.
- Keeping the goat indoors or under a dense shade will help to reduce pain to the eyes. A patch over the eye can also be used to reduce sun glare.
- Keeping infected goats away from uninfected goats is the best prevention.

## Do vaccines against pink eye exist?

- No vaccines are available.

## Are there any human health concerns?

- There are no human health concerns associated with pink eye in goats.

## Author:

### **JM Luginbuhl**

Extension Specialist (Goats & Forage Systems)  
Crop Science

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation.

Publication date: Oct. 12, 2015

Source Information: <http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/pink-eye/>

## **Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis**

**[www.jackmauldin.com](http://www.jackmauldin.com)**

The swelling (inflammation) or infection of the membrane lining the eyelids. Pink eye is a common term used to describe many different diseases affecting the eyes of animals. It is an infectious and contagious bacterial disease of many animals including goats. It can be caused by several different microorganisms. Two of those microorganisms are *Chlamydia psittaci ovis* and *Mycoplasma conjunctivae*. The *Chlamydia* organism is the same organism that can cause abortions in does. The pink eye infection can be contagious to people so be careful when handling animals with this disease.

Pink eye generally will spread from a single animals to many others in your herd Spreading occurs from direct contact between each other or through flies or dust that can carry the bacteria to the eye. The condition is painful and may affect just one eye or both. Whatever causes the problem, the symptoms are similar. Those symptoms may include:

- blinking repeatedly
- an aversion to bright sunlight
- the side of the face below the eye may be wet from tearing
- the membranes of the eye appear red and inflamed
- the eyes become cloudy or opaque
- an ulcer may develop.
- can cause temporary blindness or permanent blindness in severe cases.

### **Treatment**

Affected animals should be isolated from the rest of the herd to prevent the spread of the disease to other animals. Consider isolating them in a clean, dry, shady place.

Pink eye is usually treated with any number of antibiotics that are injected into the body or placed directly in the eye. The most common treatment is to apply terramycin ointment to the

affected eye(s) two to four times per day. Some veterinarians recommend the use of intramammary mastitis tubes such as "Today" for the treatment of pink eye. As with the terramycin ointment, the antibiotic is applied directly to the eye. Here is an ointment we have used successfully. Triple Antibiotic Ophthalmic Ointment -Triple Antibiotic Ophthalmic Ointment is a combination of three antibiotics: Neomycin, Polymyxin B, and Bacitracin. It is used to treat bacterial infections of the eyes and eyelids. We do not use eye medication that is a spray or powder. They are more irritating to the already inflamed eye. The animal's face should be cleaned and the debris around the eye should be removed before applying the medicine. If the eye looks swollen, that can be related to inflammation and we will give Banamine injections in addition to the other treatments.

When we have an animal that is having cloudy eyes, we first treat with the ointment after putting drops of penicillin or Biomycin in the eye. If the clouding of the eye does not start clearing up in a day or two, we also start giving injections of the Biomycin under the skin once a day. If that does not seem to be helping, we move to a stronger antibiotic like Nuflor.

Despite intensive efforts, treatment may have little effect on the course or severity of the disease. Pink eye is similar to Sore Mouth) in that the disease is usually self-limiting and the majority of affected animals will clear up without treatment, usually in a week to 10 days. Severely affected animals may take longer to recover. Recovered animals have resistance for varying lengths of time. It is possible for them to become reinfected, as acquired immunity is not strong or long-lasting.

