



## Tetanus in Goats

Infection of wounds by bacterium *Clostridium tetani* results in tetanus when the bacterium produces its potent toxin. Wounds can include those caused by humans when live tissues are injured and blood drawn during hoof trimming. The organism is sensitive to oxygen, so deep puncture wound are of the most concern.

**Signs:** Signs of illness can include muscle stiffness, unsteady gait, drooping eyelids, changed voice, erect ears and tail and inability to eat or drink. The signs often get progressively worse and convulsions may occur. Death occurs from asphyxiation secondary to respiratory paralysis.

**Prevention:** Prevention of this disease is much more effective and economical than treatment of affected goats. Annual vaccination is recommended for all goats for prevention.

**Treatment:** Treatment includes high doses of penicillin, anti-inflammatories and tetanus anti-toxin, but it often fails. The initial site of injury and bacterial proliferation should be searched for, and whenever is possible, the wound or infection site should be opened to the air and infiltrated with penicillin. The area can be infiltrated with tetanus antitoxin before the wound-cleansing process is begun to reduce the chance that more preexisting toxin will be absorbed during tissue manipulation. Excessive tissue manipulation may make the animal dramatically worse.

<http://www.extension.org/pages/22436/tetanus-in-goats>