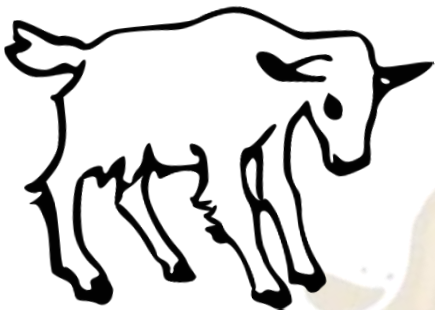


# DIARRRHEA \* SCOURS

Anytime the bacteria balance in a sheep or goat's digestive system gets “out of whack,” diarrhea (scours) can result. While diarrhea occurs frequently in sheep/ goats, it is more of a symptom than a disease. There are many causes of diarrhea, including bacterial, viral, parasitic and diet.

| Bacterial                                                                                                      | Viral                    | Parasitic                                                                                                                        | Diet                                                                                                                             | Other                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>E. Coli</i><br>Salmonella<br><i>Clostridium</i> spp.<br><i>Campylobacter</i><br>Yersinia<br>Johne's disease | Rotavirus<br>Coronavirus | Coccidia<br>Guardia<br>Cryptosporidium<br>Brown stomach worm<br>Black scour worm<br>Nematodirus<br>Tapeworms<br>Barber pole worm | Dietary change<br>Poisonous plants<br>Rumen acidosis<br>Lush pasture<br>Mineral deficiencies<br>Overeating<br>Inappropriate food | Stress<br>Travel<br>Toxins<br>Antibiotics<br>Water |



In many situations, diarrhea is transitional and will go away on its own. However, it can also indicate serious illness, and if left untreated can cause dehydration, organ damage, and death, especially in young animals.

Treatment of diarrhea depends upon the underlying cause(s). Antibiotics are not warranted in most cases and could be harmful, as they kill beneficial bacteria in the gut. Deworming isn't often the answer either, as the barber pole worm doesn't cause diarrhea, and dewormers aren't effective against coccidia, which is the more likely parasitic cause of diarrhea. In many cases, treatment is mostly supportive: hydration (electrolytes), probiotics, etc.

Most cases of diarrhea can be prevented with good hygiene and management. Dietary changes need to be made slowly, giving time for the rumen bacteria to adjust. Because coccidia is a common cause of diarrhea, it is recommended that coccidiostats be put in the feed, mineral, water, and/or milk replacer. Clostridial vaccinations (e.g., CDT) are recommended for most flocks/herds..

When woolled sheep get scours, they are at greater risk for fly strike. It's the primary reason their tails are docked. Daggy animals have less economic value.

