

GENERAL HEALTH CARE FOR YOUR GOAT

The health of our goat depends on you. The more time you spend with your goat and know what is normal for it, the easier and sooner you will be able to know if there is a problem. Knowing your goat's physical normal is also important. These include body temperature, respiratory rate, pulse, rumen activity. What is normal for one goat may not be normal for another. Getting to know these normals is also an important step in a healthy goat. The temperature is taken rectally. We use a digital human thermometer as they are easy to read, and only need to be in place for a few seconds to know if the goat has a fever or subnormal temperature. The normal temperature of an adult goat can be between 100 and 104 degrees Fahrenheit, but my experience has shown that when a goat's temperature is over 102.5 then this is considered a fever and should be dealt with in a timely manner. The respiratory rate in adult goats is approximately 10 to 30 breaths per minute. Watching the chest or abdominal wall move in and out is a good way to check this. Rumen activity or the rumination cycle occurs about every 63 seconds or about once a minute in adult goats. If you press your ear to the left side of the goat just behind the ribcage and about one-third to one-half way down from the backbone, you can hear the rumen noise, which is a growling or rumbling sound. The pulse rate ranges from 70 to 90 beats per minute. You can measure the pulse rate by listening to the heart using a stethoscope or by using your fingers to palpate an artery, either in the neck or in the thigh region.

General health care for ALL GOATS should consist of at least the following. This care extends to kid goats but they have a slightly different schedule.

1. CDT (Clostridium type C and D and Tetanus) vaccination for goats one year of age and older, this once a year at 2cc intramuscularly or subcutaneously. CDT boosters are generally given 4 to 6 weeks prior to kidding and when a goat has received a puncture wound or other deep wound or cut. This is available at most feed stores or through the internet.

2. Worming we recommend worming every two months beginning at 2 months of age. There are several different worming methods and the one we are providing you with here is the one we have advised for ease in giving as well as successful worm control through our experience. This method is an extremely easy and effective way to keep worms from causing problems in your goats. We use horse wormers, one is Zimectrin (brand name, but other generic type of this can be used) and the other is Safeguard (again a brand name with generic being okay). Zimectrin contains ivermectin that also helps control external parasites. Safeguard contains fenbendazole that also helps in controlling lung worms. Both of these ingredients are okay for use in goats to include kids and pregnant does. The tubes that these wormers come in are marked with increments of weight. A whole tube would take care of a 1,200 pound horse. Just measure the weight of your goat, double it, and then find the

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corresponding amount on the plunger of the tube. For example, if you have a 200 pound goat, you would double that to get 400 pounds, then using the increment marker on the wormer tube, get as close to the 400 pounds as you can. The increments are usually at 250, 500, 750, etc. go to the higher dose. You cannot overdose your goat using these wormers, so that would mean you would place the lock on the tube at the 500 pound mark. Place the tube tip into the side of the goat's mouth at the corner and press the plunger. Hold the goat's mouth close for a few seconds. Goats generally take the Safeguard as it tastes like apple-cinnamon, but they tend not to like the Zimectrin as it does not taste good. If your goat spits all or even what seems like most of the wormer out, you can re-do at that time, again you can not overdose these wormers, the goat's system uses what it needs and expels the rest with no residual left in the system. There are, of course, other methods for worming, but again I advise this method because of its ease and successful outcome. I generally do ova and parasite tests on my goats every 6 months or so even with the above regimen just to make sure the wormer is working well. You can learn to do this test yourself or your vet can do it for you.

3. Hoof Trimming – This is done about every four to six weeks, if possible. Each goat will have a different growth rate of its hooves, so you will need to set up a schedule that works for you and the goat. Also, nutrition plays a big part in hoof growth, so if you add more protein to the goat's diet, for example, the hoof rate will become more rapid. Please see the separate sheet that has diagrams showing the hoof trimming process. When trimming, remember to trim the hoof walls so the hoof bottom pad is flat. If you trim the hoof pad to where it begins to look pink, stop there as any closer and you will but into the hoof's blood vessels. If this happens, you can use a blood stop powder, corn starch, or a spay such as Blu-Kote to help control the bleeding.