



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

EXTENSION

RESPONSIVE. INNOVATIVE. TRUSTED.



Udder Problems in Sheep & Goats

Randy Saner

UNL Extension Educator

rsaner2@unl.edu

Hard Bag

- **HARDBAG**

- Results from an accumulation of fibrous tissue in the udder
- Caused by a virus, the same one which causes ovine progressive pneumonia, (OPP) (“lungers”)
- Mostly at lambing and at weaning
- Can blood test for virus on sheep

Blue Bag (Mastitis)

- Blue Bag
 - Form of mastitis and is caused by bacteria
 - Bacteria enter the teat canal and cause infection
 - Interferes with blood supply to the udder
 - Occurs within a couple months of lambing or shortly after weaning.
 - Treating early with antibiotics is usually successful

Mastitis in the Doe

- The most common bacteria that causes mastitis in goats are:
 - Coagulase-negative staphylococci bacteria, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Streptococcus agalactiae*, *S. uberis*, *S. dysgalactia*, and *S. caprae* *Mycoplasma capricolum*; Enterobacteria such as *Escherichia coli* coliforms (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and *Clostridium spp.*)
- Also associated with viral, bacterial or fungi and their toxins

Mastitis in Goats

- The caprine arthritis-encephalitis virus (CAEV) causes mastitis in goats.
- Mastitis can result from yeast infection
 - associated with the frequent use of penicillin
 - prolonged and repetitive use of systemic and intramammary infusions.
- Mastitis is generally associated with poor hygienic practices and caused by the bruising of mammary tissue or teats from traumas

Mastitis Clinical Symptoms

- Subclinical Mastitis
 - No swelling of udder detected or observable abnormalities in the milk
- Mild Clinical Mastitis
 - Abnormality in the milk such as flakes, clots, and a watery or other unusual appearance
 - Swelling of udder, may be hot and sensitive
- Severe Clinical Mastitis
 - hot, hard sensitive udder
 - ewe may become ill showing signs of fever (105° -107° F) rapid pulse, depression, weakness and loss of appetite
- Chronic Mastitis lumps in udder

Preventing Mastitis

- Clean fresh bedding in the corrals and in the jugs to keep udders clean
- Avoid placing on lush feed too quickly after lambing or kidding
- Provide adequate feed for lamb size
- Control respiratory infections in lambs (pasteurella) causes respiratory & mastitis

Preventing Mastitis

- Prevent lambs “bumming” milk from ewes
 - Spread infection to other ewes
- Prevent soremouth, lesions allow bacterial growth nursing lambs can infect ewe
- Restrict water and feed intake of ewes for 24 to 36 hours during weaning
- Prevent foot rot and foot scald since foot infection has been attributed to mastitis.

Preventing Mastitis

- Management at drying off is key to preventing mastitis in your flock
- The feet and udder should be routinely checked at drying off
- The udders of ewes should be examined physically for hard lumps after weaning and before breeding.

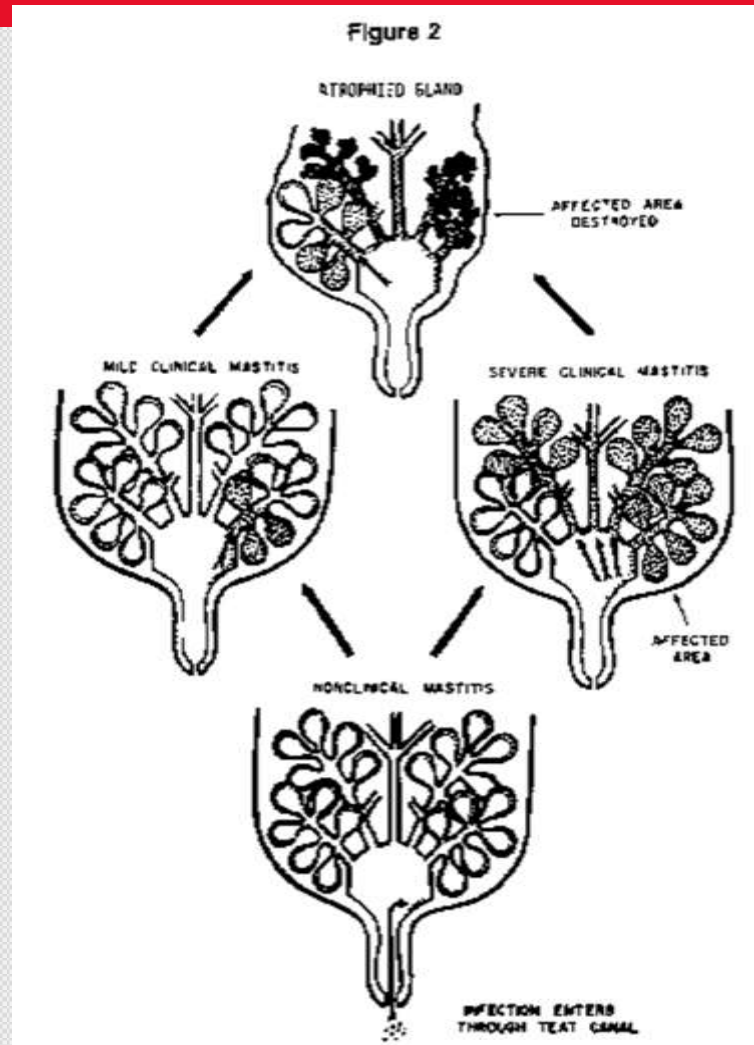
Treatment of Mastitis

- Treatment of ewes with acute mastitis is usually done with antibiotics, frequent milking, and oxytocin.
- Consult veterinarian for extra label use of antibiotics
- Disinfect the teat end with alcohol and infuse a tube of mastitis antibiotic through the teat canal.

Treatment of Mastitis

- Give the ewe an injection of a combination of penicillin, dihydrostreptomycin, dexamethasone and an antihistamine.
 - The antibiotics should affect the microorganisms and the dexamethasone and antihistamine should help the tissue heal and reduce inflammation.

Example of Mastitis Infection



Questions

- Sources

- Mastitis in the Ewe by Helen A. Swartz, Ph.D, State Sheep, Goat and Small Livestock Specialist, Lincoln University
- How to prevent ewe mastitis at weaning [Aly Balsom DVM](#)
- Ewes That Don't Milk June 20th, 2008 William P. Shulaw, Extension Veterinarian, The Ohio State University
- Udder Diseases of Sheep, *Clell V. Bagley*, DVM, Extension Veterinarian, Utah State University, Logan UT 84322-5600
- National Goat Handbook, University of Maryland
- Mastitis in Goats publication UNP 102, Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities