

13 Goat Symptoms You Should Never Ignore

Before calling your veterinarian, take note of all goat symptoms and get a temperature reading using a rectal digital thermometer.

Off Feed

If the goat refuses to eat or picks at hay/grain, look for other symptoms that indicate what the problem may be.

Temperature Too High/Low

Normal goat temperature ranges from 101.5-103.5 degrees F.

Abnormal Heartbeat/Respiration

Caprine heartbeats are approximately 70-90bpm. Respiration of mature stock is 10-30 per minute and that of young stock 20-40 per minute.

Personality Changes

Sick goats may mope around, lie down with head and ears low, and be uninterested in life around them. They may cry more than normal or be abnormally silent.

Hunched/Arched Back

This is an indication of pain and could be a stomachache, kidney issue, lower back injury, kidney infection, or urinary calculi, among other things.

Diarrhea

This could indicate disease, coccidia or other parasites, bacteria, feeding milk replacers, quick feed changes, consumption of something toxic, or over-eating on something causing acidosis/enterotoxemia. Note color and consistency, and presence of blood, before calling a veterinarian.

Abscesses

This can indicate localized infection or an incurable case of caseous lymphadenitis.

Sudden Udder Changes

Mastitis infections may present as unevenness, hot to the touch, swelling, black- or blue-looking tissue, clots and/or strings in milk, or blood in the milk.

Bloat

Whether caused by feed problems or lying too long on the goat's side, this issue is an emergency and must be treated immediately.

Coughing

Dry coughs may be allergies, dust inhalation, or chronic leftovers from illness. Goats may have a wet cough induced by parasites, bad weather, temperature fluctuations, wetness, lack of shelter, or bacterial/viral lung issues. Often accompanied by a runny nose.

Itchy/Missing Hair

Check for external parasites such as mites, fleas, or lice. Skin damage may turn to skin infection. Goats missing hair on the bridge of the nose and/or end of the tail may indicate copper deficiency and is often accompanied by loss of coat color.

Bottle Jaw

Swelling under the lower jaw is often indicative of parasite overload.

Injuries

This can include limping, bleeding, swollen or stiff joints, or swollen tissue.

