



# CAPRIPOXVIRUS

## *Sheep & Goat Pox or Capripox in Sheep and Goats*

Sheep pox and goat pox are viral diseases that spread among small ruminants. While these diseases may be mild in local breeds residing in endemic regions, they can prove fatal to newly introduced animals. Economic repercussions arise due to reduced milk production, damage to hide and wool quality, and other losses in production. Additionally, the presence of sheep pox and goat pox can hinder trade, impede the growth of intensive livestock production, and restrict the importation of new sheep or goat breeds into endemic areas. Humans are not at risk of developing sheep and goat pox.

### CAUSES OF POX

Sheep pox and goat pox are caused by sheeppox virus (SPPV) and goatpox virus (GTPV), respectively. These viruses belong to the Capripoxvirus genus in the Poxviridae family. SPPV primarily affects sheep, and GTPV mainly affects goats, but certain isolates can lead to mild to severe diseases in both species. Distinguishing between SPPV and GTPV usually relies on specialized genetic tests, although it's often based on the affected animal species during an outbreak since these tests are not widely available.

### PREVENTION OF POX

Capripoxviruses can spread through infected animals, fomites, and animal products like wool. Quarantine newly introduced animals and apply biosecurity measures to limit contact and disinfect fomites. Isolate infected herds and sick animals for 45 days after recovery. Vaccination controls sheep pox and goat pox in endemic areas, using a single or separate vaccines. In non-endemic areas, manage outbreaks with movement controls, depopulation, thorough cleaning, and proper disposal of infected carcasses. Consider vaccination for widespread outbreaks.



***This is a  
Reportable disease***

#### Sources

Sheep and goat pox - CFSPH. (n.d.-g). [https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/sheep\\_and\\_goat\\_pox.pdf](https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/sheep_and_goat_pox.pdf)

### SYMPTOMS OF POX

Symptoms of sheep and goat pox can vary depending on the severity of the infection. Common signs include:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Depression or lethargy
- Swelling and redness of the skin (pox lesions)
- Formation of nodules and pustules on the skin, which may become scabby and crusty
- Respiratory distress in severe cases

### TREATMENT OF POX

There is no specific treatment for sheep pox or goat pox, but supportive treatment may reduce morbidity and complications. Be sure to consult your veterinarian if you think there might be an outbreak in your herd.

Factsheet provided by:

**The Idaho Sheep & Goat  
Health Board**

