



TOXOPLASMA GONDII ABORTION

T. Gondii in Sheep and Goats

Toxoplasma gondii is a leading cause of abortion in small ruminants worldwide. Ingesting sporulated coccidian oocysts during early gestation leads to resorption or mummification of fetuses. Late gestation infections may cause abortions or perinatal deaths. Typically, ewes do not show signs of illness. During an outbreak, aborted fetuses' gestational ages vary widely. In most instances, no noticeable lesions are present, though a few cases may display small, white foci (1-3 mm in diameter) in certain cotyledons.

CAUSES OF T. GONDII

Toxoplasma gondii infections in sheep and goats are primarily acquired through ingestion of sporulated oocysts shed by infected cats. Cats are the definitive host of *T. gondii*, and they can excrete the oocysts in their feces. The oocysts then sporulate and become infectious after a few days in the environment. Small ruminants, such as sheep and goats, can become infected when they consume food or water contaminated with the sporulated oocysts. Additionally, congenital transmission of *T. gondii* from an infected ewe or doe to her offspring can also occur, leading to infected lambs or kids at birth.

PREVENTION OF T. GONDII

Preventing *T. gondii* in sheep and goats:

- Ensure hygiene and sanitation.
- Provide clean feed and water.
- Keep pregnant animals away from cats.
- Test and manage infected animals.
- Implement biosecurity measures.
- Monitor lambing/kidding closely.
- Consult a veterinarian for guidance.



***This is a
Notifiable disease***

SYMPTOMS OF T. GONDII

Symptoms of *T. gondii* in sheep and goats:

- Abortion and perinatal deaths in pregnant animals.
- Neurological signs like muscle tremors and lack of coordination.
- Respiratory issues and exercise intolerance.
- Reduced weight gain and appetite loss.

TREATMENT OF T. GONDII

There is currently no specific treatment available for *T. gondii* infection in sheep and goats. Once an animal is infected, the parasite can form cysts in various tissues, making it challenging to eradicate completely.

Sources

Effects of arginine supplementation on reproductive performance in ... (n.d.-d). <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/HettingerREC/>

Factsheet provided by:

**The Idaho Sheep & Goat
Health Board**

