

Coccidia (*Eimeria* spp.) in Sheep and Goats

Coccidia Life Cycle

1. Coccidia eggs (oocysts) penetrate the lining of the intestine.
 - a. The animal ingests the eggs when grazing.
 - b. The eggs then attach to the gut wall. The eggs will stay here until they are adults.
 - c. Once mature, the adult parasites multiply and release eggs into the environment through feces.
2. Eggs in the external environment.
 - a. Under correct conditions, the eggs can become infective. This can take from one week to up to a year.
 - b. The eggs thrive best in an environment with heat, humidity, and an abundance of oxygen.
3. Animals ingest eggs from the environment. This starts the cycle over again.

Symptoms

- Heavily infected animals will have the following symptoms:
 - » Foul-smelling diarrhea (with blood or mucus)
 - » Loss of appetite
 - » Fatigue
 - » Abdominal pain
 - » Weakness
- Older animals with immunity do not usually show symptoms.
- Animals with decreased immunity usually show symptoms around weaning time.

Prevention and Control

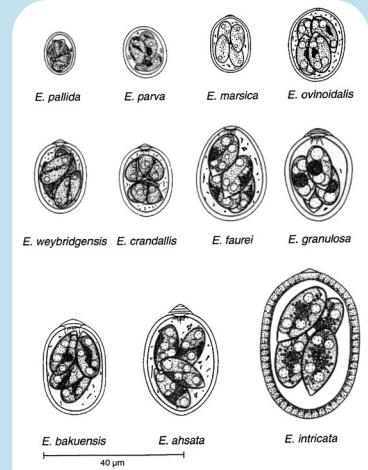
- Use coccidiostat supplements in grain to prevent coccidia in small ruminants. Coccidiostats help decrease the number of eggs in the environment. Examples of coccidiostats include monensin (Rumensin), decoquinate (Deccox), and lasalocid (Bovatec). Monensin and decoquinate are approved for goats, and lasalocid is approved for sheep.
- In addition to supplements, make sure the environment is thoroughly cleaned and exposed to sunlight, as coccidia thrive in wet environments.

Treatment

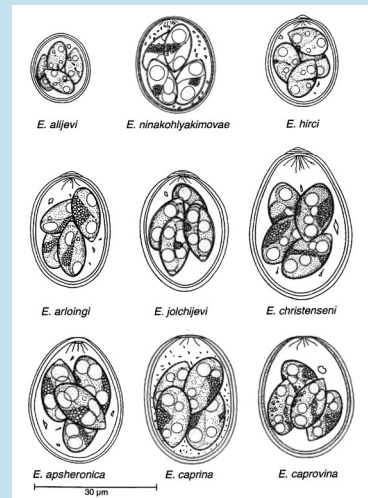
The American Consortium for Small Ruminant Parasite Control (ACSRPC) recommends treating animals with coccidiosis with amprolium (Corid). There are no labeled products specifically for small ruminants, so consult a veterinarian before treating.

References

- Mobini, S. (2015, May). *Coccidiosis in lambs and kids*. American Consortium for Small Ruminant Parasite Control (ACSRPC). <https://www.wormx.info/mobini-cocci>
- Eckert, J., Braun, R., Shirley, M. W., & Coudert, P. (Eds.). (1995). *Biotechnology: Guidelines on techniques in coccidiosis research* (pp.1-306). European Commission, Brussels & Luxembourg. Published by the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General XII Science, Research, and Development. Agriculture Biotechnology L-2920 Luxembourg.



***Eimeria* species in sheep.**



***Eimeria* species in goats.**

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