

Mastitis

Mastitis is an inflammation of the udder, almost always caused by germs but also can be a result of injury. It can be very mild to extremely severe.

Clinical Signs:

Sub-clinical:

This type of mastitis is very common.
No visible changes in the milk or udder.

Mild:

Clots in milk.*
Lumps in udder.
Hardness in udder.*

Chronic:

Repeated episodes of Mild Mastitis.

Acute:

Swollen, painful udder.
Clots and or, blood in the milk.*
Hot udder
Reduced milk yield.
The doe may be off her food.

Very acute:

All the signs of acute.
Blood is present.
The udder may feel cold.
The doe will be off her feed.
The doe's temperature may be high.

PLEASE NOTE:

- A doe can have small clumps here and there in her milk and not have mastitis.
- A hard, or firm, udder could mean just "congested udder" and not mastitis.
- You can have a small amount of blood in the milk and it not be mastitis.

Determining if a doe has mastitis

Look at the clinical signs above to help determine the potential level. Also, trust your instincts and knowledge of your own doe.

If you have dairy goats, you need to keep a **California Mastitis Test on hand at all times.** You need to be able to test your goats for mastitis. See your local livestock supplier or our [Suppliers page](#) from where to purchase this test.

Use the **CMT** (California Mastitis Test) to help determine if your doe has mastitis. This test kit is cheap and easy to find ([see suppliers](#)). Anyone with even just one milking doe should own a CMT kit. Follow the directions that come with the test. Please note, that since this test is really designed for cows, the test will sometimes indicate some thickening, even if the doe does not have mastitis. When testing goats A *trace* or 1 reaction, when the mixture looks a bit slimy, is not significant. Normal goat milk can produce this, so you can ignore this reaction. If the mixture forms a distinct gel, the 2 reaction on some CMT charts, the goat

probably has mastitis. Test your doe when you know she is healthy and learn how the test should read for normal, this way you'll know when something is abnormal.

Be aware that a doe can have some blood in her milk and not have mastitis. Sometimes, when a doe first starts lactating and the udder is becoming used to it's new job and you may find a bit of blood here and there, as the udder gets itself in working order. A doe can even has a small "clot" or two, once and a while, and this is not mastitis.

Prevention

Strict sanitation before and after milking. Make sure to wash the does udder before milking and dip her teats afterwards.

Practice holistic health husbandry and provide a stress free, clean environment.

Treatment:

Alternative Herbal/Holistic Treatment:

- Milk out and strip out the infected udder as often as possible; every hour if possible. This will help remove bacteria and toxins, reducing swellings and improving blood supply.
- Massage the udder during milking (to get out as much milk as possible), and then after milking massage for at least 5+ minutes with Molly's [Herbal Mastitis Massage Salve](#)
- Give the doe [Immune Support Herbal Tincture](#).
- If the mastitis is acute, a poultice of Comfrey would be helpful, applied after the massage.
- If you are taking an Alternative approach to treatment, DO NOT infuse anything into the udder (Colloidal Silver, etc.) this may only make matters worse.

Traditional Western Medicine Method:

- Milk out the udder *completely* and Infuse the udder with [Today](#) (Cephapirin Sodium). Follow the instructions on the instruction sheet on how to infuse.
 - 4 or 5 infusions, 12 hrs. apart
 - Use one whole tube, per infected side, per treatment. If only one side is infected, treat only that side. Never split the dose between sides (you will risk spreading the infection).
 - Make sure to properly sanitize the the teat before infusing.
 - Only use the very small tip of the applicator, inserting it only 1/4" into the teat orifice.
 - Once the tube is infused into the teat, carefully pinch the tip of the teat (to keep the orifice closed) and work the medicine up into the udder.
 - Massage the udder so that the medicine is spread thoroughly throughout the infected udder
- Accompany this treatment with systemic [Oxytetracycline](#).

- Since you are administering antibiotics, be sure to also give [Probios](#), to help keep the rumen functioning properly.
- I highly recommend massaging the udder after each treatment with [Herbal Mastitis Massage Salve](#).
- I also recommend giving the doe [Immune Support Herbal Tincture](#).