

Tetanus following castration in a buck

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Tetanus is a non contagious infectious disease caused by the toxins of *Clostridium tetani*. Goats are moderately sensitive to tetanus, which may develop as a complication of routine farm procedures. Few cases are described in this species. This paper reports a lethal tetanus infection following castration in a buck. A 6 month-old buck displayed bloat symptoms 8 days after surgical castration. The buck was anxious and presented a deformation of the left flank. The feces were macroscopically normal and the buck defecated spontaneously. Auscultation and palpation revealed an accumulation of gas in the rumen. Gas was evacuated through an esophageal tube and the buck regained his appetite. Twelve hours later, the animal presented typical tetanus symptoms: generalized stiffness, saw-horse stance, trismus and hyperreactivity to stimuli. Hematology revealed a moderate neutrophilia. The owner specified that the animal was housed with horses and no antitetanic prophylaxis had been performed when castrating it. IV-penicillin, antitetanic serum, diazepam and isotonic Lactate-Ringer were administered. The scrotum was flushed with 0.03%-H₂O₂ and the buck was isolated in a safe box. After twelve hours, the buck was recumbent, rigid and displayed opisthotonus. As the prognosis was poor, it was euthanatized. Necropsy confirmed a necrotizing bursitis. Histopathological examination of the brain was normal. This case underlines the importance of antitetanic prophylaxis when performing routine operations in goats. The outcome of tetanus is often fatal in this species, as treatment is generally started too late.