

Wasting Diseases

Disorder	What Do you See?	Cause/Transmission	Treatment	Prevention
Johne's Disease (Paratuberculosis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most often noticed in animals over 1yr of age • progressive weight loss to emaciation • may be diarrhea and soiling of fleece on hindquarters • poor lamb performance • affected animal dies after a period of illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intestinal damage due to bacterial infection, leading to inability to absorb nutrients • transferred by contact with infected animal (feces, colostrum, placenta) • bacteria can survive for 2yrs in environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none, cull suspected cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blood or fecal sample flock and cull positives (tests not always accurate) • maintain sanitary barn conditions • buy breeding stock from a known reputable source • consider testing a percentage of cull animals at diagnostic lab to determine incidence in flock (high incidence depopulation and restocking is an option). Accuracy of test may be questionable – consult with your vet.
Maedi-Visna (see Respiratory diseases for details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some animals may be infected but not show signs, other than general wasting 			
Caseous Lymphadenitis (Pseudotuberculosis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most often seen in animals over 6 months • signs depend on where disease manifests itself, may be no external signs but poor condition: external: lymph nodes of neck, under jaw, face, shoulder are enlarged, often abscess (open pus-filled sores) internal: abscesses form in lungs and other internal organs (respiratory distress) • general weight loss, poor production • sudden death may occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bacteria enters through cuts and abrasions in skin • transmitted by direct contact between animals and contaminated shearing equipment • bacteria can survive for months in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culling of infected animals recommended • abscesses will heal, but reoccur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very common disease, often spread by purchasing infected breeding stock • vaccine available; treat new stock before entering flock (often given in 3 or 6-way shot with clostridial vaccines) • avoid cutting animals with shears, disinfect shears between animals • shear groups less likely to have the disease first (e.g. young animals before older animals)
Dental disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most often in older sheep (3 yrs and older) • decreased appetite • weight loss • no signs of neurological disorders (not uncoordinated etc.) • tooth loss, bad breath, poor gums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infection by various types of bacteria • cause unknown, maybe related to calcium:phosphorous imbalance in diet and/or excessively hard feeds (roots etc), possible genetic link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check Ca:P balance in diet • good quality feed • purchase young stock and check teeth before purchase • check for tooth loss in adults as part of pre-breeding check (with condition scoring and udder check)
Scrapie (See 'Neurological Diseases for details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disease varies in signs, may see significant wasting before neurological signs – reportable disease 			