

Neurological Disorders

Disorder	What Do you See?	Cause/Transmission	Treatment	Prevention
Tetanus (Lockjaw)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limb stiffness, stilted gait as disease advances, animal will stiffen completely and not be able to open jaw convulsions, often triggered by sudden noises 3rd eyelid membrane may be visible breathing difficult death occurs in 3-4 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bacteria in soil (<i>Clostridium tetani</i>) enters body through wound and produces a toxin which damages nervous system bacteria grows in absence of oxygen, therefore deep puncture wounds are problematic most often seen in lambs after castration or docking (elastrator bands and contaminated knives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually too late by the time animal shows obvious signs clean damaged area and any dead material if animal has not been previously vaccinated, dose with tetanus antitoxin and tetanus toxoid (vaccine) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vaccinate ewes using an 8-way (Clostridial and tetanus toxoid) prior to lambing use clean equipment for castration and docking, house lambs in sanitary conditions don't use elastrator bands on farms with previous cases of tetanus
Listeriosis (Circling Disease) (also see abortion diseases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most often seen in feedlot lambs, but also possible in animals of any age depression, off feed, fever one side of the body is affected (face paralysis, droopy ear, lip and eyelid) animal walks in a circle convulsions, death diagnostic lab can identify bacteria and examine brain for abscesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bacteria (<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>) forms abscesses in brain contracted from infected sheep through cuts spoiled feed (particularly silage) often implicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> antibiotic treatment rarely successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide good quality feed properly dispose of deadstock keep pregnant ewes away from sick lamb area
Polio Encephalomalacia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seen most often in feeder lambs non-infectious (no fever) may see blindness, staggering, head pressing, progressing to convulsions, coma, and death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not known for certain, but thought to be a deficiency of thiamine (vitamin B1), due to microbes in the rumen depleting thiamine supplies (can be provided in diet but not available to the animal) high mineral content in water may be a contributing factor deficiency will eventually give rise to neurological disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> this is an emergency situation, (contact vet) but if the animal is treated quickly the prognosis is good intravenous thiamine injections separate animal during recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider adding brewer's yeast to grain rations avoid feeding mouldy hay provide adequate water and water analysis

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<p>Scrapie</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relatively rare, but reportable disease long incubation time, animal may be infected at birth but no signs until sheep is 2yrs or older typically extensive loss of wool due to rubbing uncoordinated, muscle tremor, twitching, grinding teeth, convulsions some sheep die quickly with few signs, most die within six months of first signs diagnosis only confirmed by lab exam of the brain after death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prion disease (abnormal protein in body which builds up in nervous tissue) transmitted to lambs and older sheep that come in contact with placenta and birth fluids of an infected animal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no treatment reportable by law, contact your vet immediately if you suspect your flock may be infected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> careful screening of breeding stock sources voluntary federal scrapie program is in development to identify flocks at risk of infection, may involve live-animal test and/or testing for genetically resistant animals
<p>Rabies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> restlessness, twitching lips, excessive drooling <p>(note: not all drooling animals will have rabies, often may be an obstruction in the throat or mouth, however, always wear gloves if you may come in contact with saliva)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> animals may act either excessively docile (depressed form) or aggressive butting against wall or fence etc. males may show sexual behaviour animal is progressively paralyzed and generally dies within six days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> viral disease which attacks the central nervous system usually contracted from the bite of an infected animal (dog, fox, skunk etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> none reportable disease, contact your veterinarian immediately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no vaccine for sheep vaccinate farm dogs annually control populations of potential carriers (foxes, skunks etc.)
<p>Maedi-Visna (see Respiratory Diseases for details)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maedi-Visna has a respiratory form and a much less common neurological form (very rare in North America) staggering, gradual paralysis 			