

CAPRINE ARTHRITIS AND ENCEPHALITIS (CAE)

ETIOLOGY

CAE is caused by a retrovirus and is antigenically related to the OPP virus. Transmission occurs through milk and colostrum and may occur during the birth process. Horizontal transmission among non-lactating goats is limited.

CLINICAL FINDINGS

Leukoencephalomyelitis is most often seen in kids 2-4 months of age. It usually begins with posterior weakness and progresses to an ascending paralysis followed by seizures and death. Encephalitis can occur in adults but usually progresses more slowly.

The arthritic form most often affects adult goats but can be seen as early as four months of age. It typically has a long clinical course with acute flare-ups of pain, lameness, and swelling of joints.

DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis of the encephalitic and arthritic form of CAE depends on both clinical and post-mortem findings including histopathology. Positive serology is not pathognomonic for either the encephalitic or arthritic form.

TREATMENT AND CONTROL

There is no treatment for the encephalitic form. Symptomatic treatment can be used to reduce pain and inflammation in the arthritic form.

The rate of infection can be reduced by removing kids from infected does immediately at birth, feeding heat treated colostrum (132°F one hour) and feeding pasteurized milk.

A control program is being considered in New York along with OPP.