

## Tapeworms (*Moniezia expansa*) in Sheep and Goats

### Moniezia Life Cycle

1. Adult tapeworms attach to the intestines of small ruminants.
  - a. Goats or sheep ingest mites while grazing.
  - b. Young tapeworms attach to the gut wall and develop into adults.
  - c. Adults release segments (proglottids) that end up in the feces.
  - d. Proglottids contain eggs.
2. Eggs in the external environment.
  - a. Proglottids in feces dry up, revealing the eggs inside.
3. Mites eat the tapeworm eggs.
  - a. Tapeworms develop inside the mites.

### Symptoms

- Heavily infected young animals will present with pot bellies, constipation or mild diarrhea, poor growth, rough coat, and anemia.
- Most older animals will not show symptoms.

### Diagnosis

The presence of proglottids in a fecal sample, along with eggs, under a microscope.

### Prevention and Control

- It is almost impossible to prevent because of the difficulty in eradicating mites.
- Good news! This is not zoonotic (does **not** infect humans) and will not spread from goat to goat because the animals need to ingest the contaminated mites.

### Treatment

- The American Consortium for Small Ruminants (ACSRPC) recommends treating infected animals with oral Valbazen (albendazole).
- Information on dosing can be found at the [ACSRPC's Deworming page](#).
- Always consult a veterinarian before treating animals!

### References

Junquera, P. (2021, July 9). *Moniezia spp., parasitic tapeworms of sheep, goats, cattle, and other livestock: Biology, prevention, and control*. Parasitipedia. [https://parasitipedia.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2582&Itemid=2864](https://parasitipedia.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2582&Itemid=2864)

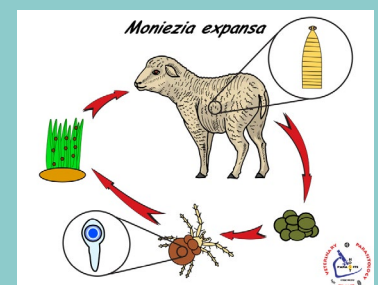
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Proglottids in a fecal sample.  
Photo: ACSRPC.



Eggs under a microscope.



Life cycle of *Moniezia expansa*. Photo: North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

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