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Kid & Doe Postpartum Management

Writing these columns weekly often pulls on personal experiences that have recently crossed my path. Today's topic is one that I don't have applied knowledge with, but thankfully we have a resource at K-State who does! Dr. Kelsey Bentley, Small Ruminant Extension Specialist, has recently published some very helpful publications. This article is an excerpt from MF3689 [*Kidding Resources for Beginning Goat Producers*](#), check it out at the K-State online bookstore to learn more about goat production.

The process of kidding can be stressful for animals and managers alike, often being a time of close and careful observation. The postpartum management window can be as important or more so than the actual process of birth. Once kids are born, follow these helpful next steps with approximate timelines postpartum shown. Hopefully these will serve as good reminders as we enter the typical kidding season.

Step 1: Ensure that the kid is breathing within the first few minutes following parturition. The doe should begin cleaning the kid. Ensure all mucus is removed from the head and muzzle. If a kid is struggling to breathe, firmly pat its side to encourage it to inhale.

Step 2: Observe from a distance (10 to 30 minutes). Maintain a distance and avoid interfering with the maternal bonding period. Watch for contractions. If only one kid is visible, another may still be coming. Wait until the kid attempts to stand on its own. Ensure the doe remains attentive and close to the kid. Look for signs of nursing, such as tail wagging, which indicates that the kid is feeding.

Step 3: Move doe and kid(s) to jug (1 hour). With gloved hands, use the kid(s) to guide the doe into the jug. If there are concerns about additional kids, palpate the doe to confirm.

Step 4: Kid processing (1 to 2 hours). Clip: if needed, trim the navel cord to less than 2 inches from the body wall. Dip: spray or dip navel in disinfectant such as iodine or betadine. Strip: strip teats to remove wax plugs and check the milk supply. Sip: make sure kids nurse as soon as possible. Check eyelids to ensure there is no entropion or inversion of the eyelid.

Step 5: Placenta delivery (4 to 6 hours). The doe may consume the placenta, so you might not see this step. If the doe doesn't consume her passed placenta, remove it from the jug. Never pull or tug on a retained placenta; this can cause hemorrhage.

Step 6: Monitor pairs in jug (24 to 48 hours). Routinely check to ensure kids are healthy, content, and well-fed. Ensure the doe is eating and drinking plenty of water. Inspect the udder for any signs of uneven fullness, mastitis, fever, or redness.

Step 7: Move to mixing pen (after 48 hours). Tag the kids before transferring them with the doe to a group setting. Routinely scan mixing pens for sick or chilled kids. Keep the creep pen clean, dry, and stocked with creep feed for the kids.