

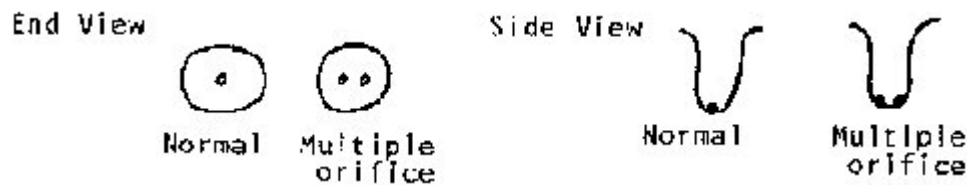
More on Teats

by Lorrie Blackburn, DVM

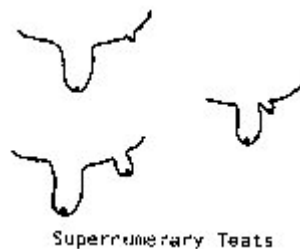
Our Breed Standard calls for “Teats – cylindrical, of uniform length and size – sufficient for milking with two fingers and thumb; symmetrically placed; free of obstruction, deformities or multiples orifices.” Remember that the breed standard is describing the “ideal” Pygmy goat. We may all be trying to breed the ideal pygmy, but chances are that none of us will quite succeed.

The faulting sheet states that if the teats are too small, too close together, or uneven in size or placement, the doe is considered to have a moderate fault. These are all variations from the ideal, and each individual judging of the animal (either you, as the owner, or a judge in the show ring) must decide just how small is too small, etc.

If a doe has multiple orifices in a teat, she is considered to have a serious fault. Normally a teat has one opening in the center of the tip. Occasionally an animal will have either one, or rarely both, teats with two openings at the tip. Multiple orifices usually cause a slight flattening of the tip of the teat. They are of no consequence to the doe or to her nursing kids. However, it is quite a messy job to milk a teat with multiple orifices since the milk is ejected in more than one direction.

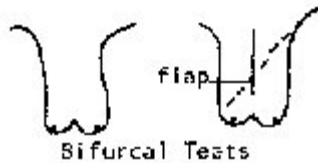


Multiple teats (also called extra teats and supernumerary teats) [are] a serious [. . .] fault in a doe and are a disqualifying fault in bucks. A multiple teat refers to any teat in excess of the normal two teats and distinct from the normal two teats. Sometimes a small wart, mole, or improperly healed cut will cause a “round, raised lesion” on an udder. This may look like a multiple teat on first glance and care should be taken to try to determine if it truly is an extra teat. Multiple teats are sometimes functional – milk will flow from all three or four teats on one doe. [. . .]



Bifurcal teats (also called double teats) refer to teats which are fused along their length. These teats are usually split for a short distance near their tips and the shaft of the teat

is wider than normal. There should be no confusion between multiple orifices and bifurcal teats. Bifurcal teats are a disqualifying fault. They are more serious than multiple teats since more udder health problems may occur with double teats. When the teats fuse, there is sometimes a flap left in the teat canal which makes hand milking or nursing difficult or impossible. Other times the teats fuse so that each teat drains milk from separate sections of the udder. More mastitis would be seen as a result of improper drainage of milk from all the udder.



Blind teats are a disqualifying fault. There may be no opening in the tip of the teat, or there may be no canal inside the teat. This second possibility can be diagnosed only in a lactating animal. If both teats are blind, then the does has a blind udder, and while she does produce milk, there is no way for her kids to obtain it. (A blind udder may also occur because of structural problems within the udder and the teats may be normal.)

Excerpts from:

Hale, Lydia, and Ellen Kritzman, eds. [Pygmy Goats: Best of Memo \(1976-1981\)](#)

National Pygmy Goat Association: pp 52-53

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