

Myotonic in Goats

A **myotonic goat**, otherwise known as the **fainting goat**, is a [domestic goat](#) whose muscles freeze for roughly 10 seconds when the goat feels [panic](#). Though painless, this generally results in the animal collapsing on its side. The characteristic is caused by a hereditary [genetic disorder](#) called [myotonia congenita](#). When startled, younger goats will stiffen and fall over. Older goats learn to spread their legs or lean against something when startled, and often they continue to run about in an awkward, stiff-legged shuffle.

Myotonic means when they are frightened or excited they "lock up" and often fall over (faint) and lie very stiff for a few seconds. It is an over-simplification, but the chemicals which are rushed to humans' muscles and joints to prepare them for "fight or flight" are withheld in the Myotonic under exciting or frightful circumstances.

It is an interesting condition and is painless. The only consistent changes are the lack of muscle relaxation following contraction and an increase in muscle mass over animals that lack the condition.

The myotonic condition is strictly muscular, and does not involve the nerves or the brain.

The American Livestock Breed Conservancy has placed this breed of goat on their "rare" list, with an estimated world population of under 10,000.

Fainting goats have a muscle condition called myotonia congenita. This is a condition which occurs in many species, including humans. The goats do not truly "faint" in any sense of the word, as they never lose consciousness because of their myotonia