

2. Coccidiosis

Overview

Coccidiosis is a parasitic disease caused by protozoa of the genus *Eimeria*. It primarily affects the intestinal tract of chickens, especially in intensive production systems.

Causes

- Ingestion of oocysts from contaminated litter, feed, or water.
- High stocking density and poor hygiene increase the risk of infection.

Symptoms

- Diarrhea, sometimes with blood.
- Lethargy and reduced appetite.
- Poor weight gain and decreased egg production.
- In severe cases, dehydration and mortality.

Prevention and Control

- **Hygiene and Sanitation:** Regular cleaning and disinfection of poultry houses.
- **Management Practices:** Avoid overcrowding and manage litter moisture.
- **Vaccination:** Live vaccines are available for coccidiosis; they expose birds to controlled doses of oocysts to build immunity.
- **Chemoprophylaxis:** Use of anticoccidial drugs in feed may help prevent outbreaks.

Treatment

- **Anticoccidial Medications:** Drugs such as amprolium and sulfa drugs under veterinary supervision.
- **Supportive Care:** Fluid therapy and nutritional support.

Image Suggestions

- Microscopic images of *Eimeria* oocysts.
- Photos showing typical lesions in the intestines of affected birds.