

CWD

Chronic Wasting Disease

What Is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a progressive and fatal neurologic disease affecting members of the Cervid family such as deer, elk, moose, and caribou (reindeer). CWD is caused by an infectious protein called a prion. CWD is always fatal with no treatment currently available.

How Is CWD Spread?

- CWD is transmitted directly by animal-to animal contact or indirectly by contact with a contaminated environment. Congregating deer around food sources greatly increases the risk of spread where CWD is known to exist.
- CWD can be spread by the natural movement of infected animals or by humans moving live, infected, captive deer or carcass parts of infected deer.
- CWD prions are shed from the infected animals in saliva, blood, feces, and urine.
- Prions have been found throughout the body of infected deer, particularly in the brain, eyes, spinal cord, spleen, tonsils, and lymph nodes.
- Prions are shed before the animals appear sick and are known to remain infectious in the environment for decades where they bind to soil and plants.

What Does CWD Infection Look Like?

- CWD is only symptomatic in older deer but all adult deer are susceptible. CWD-infected symptom-free deer are more likely to die from deer-vehicle collisions, predation, hunters, pneumonia or other illness, or parasites than healthy deer.
- Late-stage symptoms include: Emaciation, excessive salivation, lack of muscle coordination, difficulty in swallowing, excessive thirst, excessive urination, an exaggerated wide posture, may stagger and carry the head and ears lowered, dull expression, and loss of fear of humans.

NJ Taking Action to Prevent CWD

What is New Jersey Doing to Prevent CWD?

- Banned the importation of any live cervid into New Jersey since 2002. Limited the movement of captive cervids.
- Banned the importation of **whole** hunter-killed carcasses.
- Banned the use, sale and possession of deer-derived scents, lures and deer semen. Only synthetic scents or natural lures made from species not in the deer family are legal for hunting in New Jersey.

Why is this helpful?

- CWD continues to be found at captive cervid facilities in increasing numbers.
- Many states have reported CWD cases and this is an effort to keep New Jersey CWD free.
- The infectious prions which cause CWD are found in urine, and any exposure has the potential of spreading the disease. Urine for natural lures is collected from captive deer in catch pens that contaminate urine with feces and saliva which also contain prions.

Regulations to Stop the Spread of CWD

Whole Deer Carcass Ban

- Hunters are banned from bringing a whole carcass from any member of the Cervid family such as deer, elk, moose, and caribou (reindeer) into New Jersey from ANY other state or country.
- Hunters are banned from bringing a nontaxidermied head of any member of the Cervid family into New Jersey from ANY other state or country.
- ONLY boned-out meat, cleaned skullcaps and hides, shed antlers, and clean upper canine teeth of any member of the Cervid family may be brought into New Jersey.

Deer-Derived Scent And Lure Ban

- Lures and scents made from deer are banned for sale, possession, and use while hunting in New Jersey, including deer urine and deer glandular secretions, as infectious prions that cause CWD can be found in these fluids.
- ONLY synthetic scents or natural lures made from species not in the deer family are legal for deer hunting in New Jersey.
- Many synthetic products are readily available at sporting goods stores and online retailers. Hunters must use these products as part of New Jersey's effort to keep CWD out of the state.

Keep NJ CWD-Free

IF you see a deer showing CWD symptoms while out hunting:

- ✓ Shoot the deer and note the exact location, if possible with a GPS waypoint.
- ✓ Place your shot in the vital organs as the head is needed for testing. Do not field dress the deer.
- ✓ Immediately contact Fish and Wildlife to surrender the **WHOLE** carcass. (If it is a **BUCK** you will be given a replacement tag).
 - » FW Wildlife Health: 908-735-6398
 - » FW Deer Biologists: Statewide 609-223-6072; North 908-735-7040; South 856-875-6418
 - » FW Law Enforcement: Northern 908-735-8240; Central 609-259-2120; Southern 856-629-0555

When hunting in other states, bring home **ONLY**:

- ✓ Cut and wrapped meat (either commercially or privately)
- ✓ Deboned meat (meat with bones removed)
- ✓ Hides with no head attached
- ✓ Finished taxidermy heads
- ✓ Antlers with no attached tissue
- ✓ Clean skulls or skull plates with no attached lymphoid or brain tissue (skull plates, antlers or skulls from which residual brain tissue has been removed should be soaked in a 30 percent bleach solution for 15 minutes to destroy the prions.)
- ✓ Upper canine teeth (also known as buglers, whistlers or ivories)

When hunting in other states, **DO NOT** bring home:

- ✗ Whole carcass from any member of the Cervid family such as deer, elk, moose, and caribou (reindeer)
- ✗ Nontaxidermied head of any member of the Cervid family

