

Precautions when pursuing or handling deer that may have been exposed to CWD

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a contagious neurological disease that is always fatal to members of the deer family. Currently, there is no scientific evidence that CWD can be transmitted to humans or livestock under natural conditions. Hunters are advised to take the following precautions when pursuing or handling deer, elk, moose, caribou or other members of the deer family when hunting in a state where CWD has been detected:

- Do not shoot, handle or consume any animal that is acting abnormally or appears to be sick.
- Avoid consuming meat from any animal that tests positive for CWD.

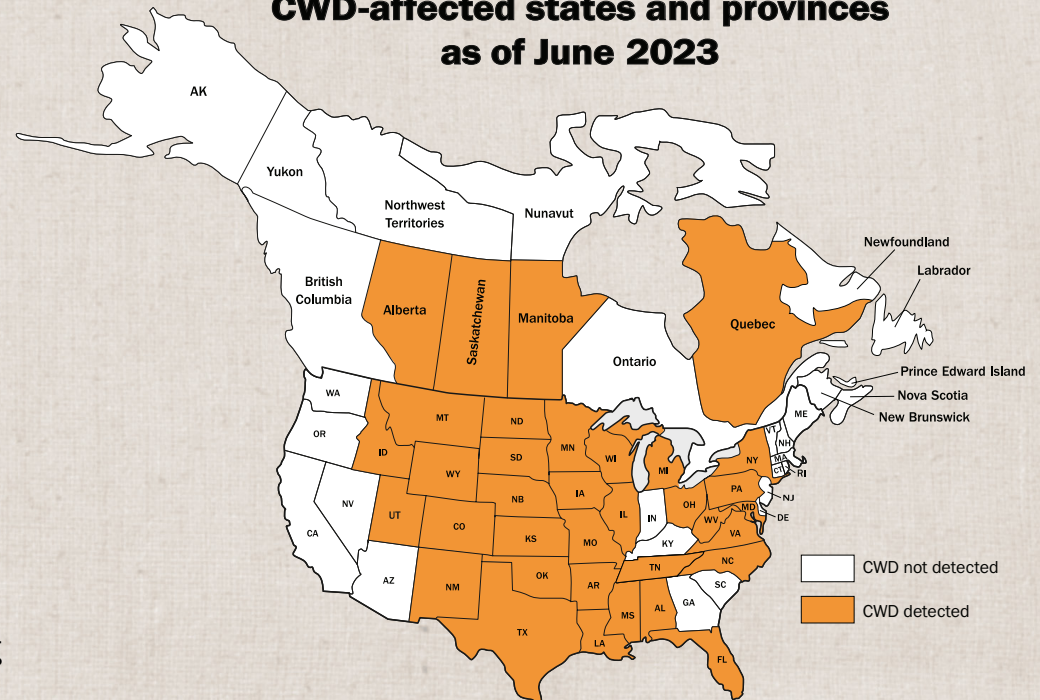
Guidance for field dressing and processing

- Wear latex or rubber gloves.
- Bone out the meat. Don't saw through bone and avoid cutting through the brain or spinal cord (backbone).
- Minimize the handling of brain, lymph nodes and spinal tissues.
- Wash hands and instruments thoroughly afterward.
- Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils and lymph nodes of harvested animals. Normal field dressing coupled with boning out a carcass will remove most, if not all, of these body parts.
- Cutting away all fatty tissue will remove remaining lymph nodes.
- If you have your deer commercially processed, request your animal be processed individually, with no meat from other animals added to yours.

If you see or harvest an animal in Florida that appears sick, call the FWC's CWD hotline at 866-CWD-WATCH (293-9282).

Visit [MyFWC.com/CWD](https://myfwc.com/cwd)

**CWD-affected states and provinces
as of June 2023**



[MyFWC.com](https://myfwc.com)

About Chronic Wasting Disease

CWD is a contagious brain and central nervous system disease that is fatal to deer, elk, moose, caribou and other members of the deer family. This disease is caused by abnormal proteins called prions that accumulate in the brain and spinal column, causing irreversible damage and ultimately death. Signs of the disease usually appear 1 1/2 to 3 years after initial exposure so deer can be infected with CWD but look normal. Typically, CWD is characterized by extreme weight loss and abnormal behaviors such as listlessness, lowering of the head, inattentiveness toward people, walking in circles, staggering, and standing with a wide stance.

Unintentionally transporting infected deer, elk, moose and caribou carcasses is a known risk for introducing CWD to new areas. CWD can be transmitted in different ways including direct animal-to-animal contact. It also can be transmitted indirectly. Members of the deer family can become infected when they consume CWD prions from soil contaminated with the feces, urine, saliva, other bodily fluids or decomposed tissues of a CWD-infected carcass. CWD prions persist in the environment and remain contagious for years. There is no evidence CWD can be transmitted to livestock or humans.

**If you see a sick, abnormally thin deer or
find a deer dead from unknown causes
call the CWD hotline at
866-CWD-WATCH (866-293-9282)
to report the location
of the animal.**



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