

# Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer

What hunters should know and how to get involved

## What is chronic wasting disease (CWD)?

**A deadly disease in cervids, such as deer and moose, that affects the brain and nervous system, caused by a contagious, misshapen protein (prion).**

- Similar to mad cow disease, scrapie in sheep, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans.
- It spreads from direct contact, body fluids and antler velvet, and can stay in the environment for years.



CWD in Free Ranging Deer (Map: MDNR)

## Are people at risk for CWD?

**It is unclear if people can get CWD, but currently it is NOT recommended to eat venison from sick or CWD positive deer**

The riskiest parts of a deer include:

- Brain
- Spinal cord
- Spleen
- Lymph nodes

**Wear gloves and avoid these organs as much as possible!**

**Sault Tribe Wildlife Program**  
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## How do you know if a deer has CWD?

**You often can't. It can take 2-5 years for a deer to look sick, they can appear healthy and still carry CWD.**

Symptoms can include:

- Being very skinny, loss of muscle
- Drooling or salivating a lot
- Unusual behavior such as:
  - Not being afraid of people
  - Stumbling, trembling
  - Drooping head or ears

You can have your deer tested for CWD, to protect your family and help monitor the health of our deer.

In exchange, you will be given a **free box of copper ammunition**