



# T A K E A I M A T T H E S P R E A D

What Hunters Should Know About Chronic Wasting Disease



## **CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE IS ALWAYS FATAL**

Chronic Wasting Disease [CWD] is a prion disease that causes misfolded proteins in deer and elk. The disease is spread through the environment, and through saliva, feces, and urine of infected animals.

CWD progresses in the animal over an incubation period of 16-24 months. For most of that time, the infected animal does not show signs of infection. But during the final progression, symptoms like lack of coordination, poor body condition, hanging the head, drooling, lack of fear of people, and a wide stance begin to appear.

# GET THE GAME PLAN

When possible, hunters should bone out meat and leave the carcass at the hunting site. The next best alternative is to quarter the animal, leaving the spinal column and head at the hunting site.

If the animal is transported from the hunting site to be processed, the carcass should be returned to the hunting site or disposed of in a local landfill.

There are no reported cases of CWD transmitting from animals to humans through meat consumption. However, prion research has shown the risk is not zero.

If an animal was harvested in an area where deer and elk populations are known to have CWD, KDWPT advises testing for the presence of the disease before consuming the meat.

Outside of family groups, deer do not naturally congregate in the same area, which slows the transmission of CWD. Man-made gathering spots like feeding grounds and mineral licks increase the spread of CWD through contact with saliva, feces, and urine.

Food plots spread over a large area or uncut ag crops are the best solution to avoid unnatural animal congregation.

Watch for sick animals on your trail cam and remember that CWD is influenced by the interactions of animal social structure, deer density, disease prevalence, and environmental contamination.

Hunters play an important role in keeping deer densities in check. Continue to participate in the sport and encourage others to do the same, to increase the chance of removing CWD-positive deer and reducing CWD prevalence and geographic spread.

Learn more at: [ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/Big-Game-Information](https://ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/Big-Game-Information)

## **DRESS.**

Dispose of carcasses at the harvest site or in a local landfill

## **TEST.**

Test the deer before processing or consuming, if harvested in an area known to have CWD

## **SUPPRESS.**

Scatter feed, bait, and minerals over large areas, or use uncut ag crops

## **WATCH THE WASTE**

If you see an animal with a lack of coordination, poor body condition, hanging their head, drooling, a lack of fear of people, or a wide stance, please contact a Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism game warden or wildlife biologist in your region. For contact information, visit:

[ksoutdoors.com/KDWPT-Info/Locations](https://ksoutdoors.com/KDWPT-Info/Locations)

Your help means healthier game populations for future generations of hunters.

**KANSAS**  
WILDLIFE, PARKS & TOURISM