

### **Where Can I have a Deer, Elk, or Moose Tested?**

There are several ways to get your harvested animal tested:

- Take your harvested animal to a check station and ask them to sample your animal for CWD.
- Take your harvested animal to a WGFD regional office – if no one is available to take a sample at the time, you may have to leave the head for samples to be collected when personnel are available.
- CWD test results from WGFD surveillance are usually available online within 3 weeks.
- If you want results within 10 working days, you can go to the Wyoming State Veterinary Lab in Laramie and pay a \$30 fee for testing (307) 766-9925.
- Quarter and freeze your animal until test results are returned to save on meat processing costs if your animal is positive.

### **What can you do to help?**

- Have your harvested animal tested for CWD to help with our statewide surveillance program.
- Report sick deer, elk, and moose. Contact the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to report sick animals. Removing CWD positive animals from the landscape can help to minimize transmission of the disease.
- Be aware of carcass transport regulations that apply to animals harvested in hunt areas where CWD is known to occur.



### **For more information contact:**

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# **Chronic Wasting Disease in Wyoming**



### What is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a chronic, fatal disease of the central nervous system in mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, and moose. CWD belongs to the group of rare diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). These disorders are thought to be caused by abnormal proteins called “prions.”

### What do deer and elk with CWD look like?

Early in disease, animals may show no clinical signs. Later on, affected animals show progressive weight loss, reluctance to move, excessive salivation, droopy ears, increased drinking and urinating, lethargy, and eventually death. Not all individual animals will show all the typical signs of CWD. Animals will test positive for the disease long before clinical signs appear.

### How is CWD transmitted?

Evidence suggests that CWD is transmitted via saliva, urine, feces, or even infected carcasses. Animals may also be infected through the environment via contamination of feed or pasture with prions (which can persist for 10+ years). The most likely route of exposure is through ingestion.

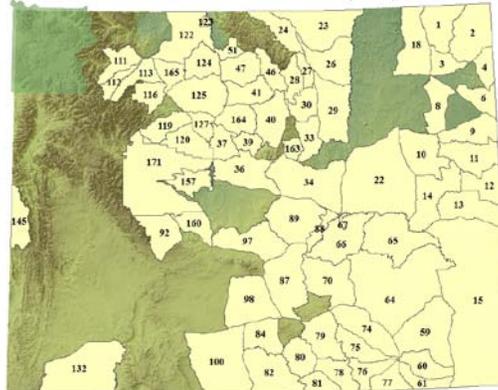
### How often does it occur?

The prevalence of CWD is higher in deer than elk, and prevalence varies by hunt area. CWD is most prevalent in the southeastern portion of Wyoming. Over the past 30 years, Wyoming has seen CWD prevalence increase, particularly in southeastern Wyoming.

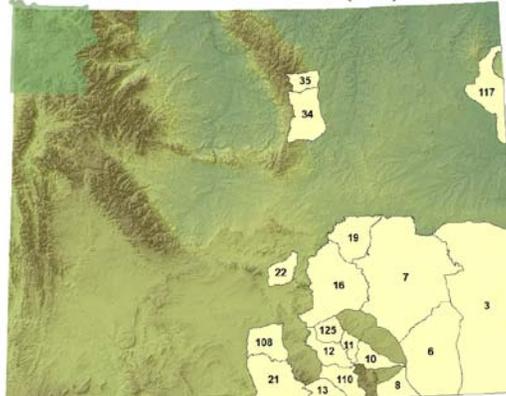


An elk showing signs of chronic wasting disease: drooling, droopy ears, and weight loss

2015 Wyoming Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Positive Deer Hunt Areas (HAs)



2015 Wyoming Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Positive Elk Hunt Areas (HAs)



### How does CWD impact deer, elk, and moose populations?

Recent research in Wyoming and Colorado suggests that CWD can lead to declines in some deer populations and possibly elk populations. There is currently no data to suggest population impacts in moose.

### Is it safe to eat a CWD infected animal?

There is currently no evidence that CWD is transmitted to humans. However, because of the long time between exposure to CWD and the development of disease, many years of continued follow-up are required to be able to say what the risk of CWD is to humans. The CDC and WHO recommend that humans do not ingest meat from any animal known to have CWD.

### What precautions should hunters take?

- Animals that appear sick should not be harvested or consumed.
- Wear rubber or latex gloves when field dressing carcasses.
- Minimize handling of brain and spinal tissues and wash your hands and instruments afterwards.
- Don't eat the brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, and lymph nodes.
- When butchering, meat should be boned out.
- Knives and other butchering equipment can be disinfected by soaking in 10% household bleach for 30 minutes (may rust some equipment).

