



# CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

## *A Continuing Threat to White-Tailed Deer*

### DEER HUNTERS — TAXIDERMISTS — DEER PROCESSORS

Whether you wait all year to hunt white-tails in the fall, make your living perfecting lifelike mounts or earn extra cash by cutting up deer, you have a stake in keeping New York State's deer herd free from Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

## THE FACTS

Knowing the facts of this threatening disease and taking appropriate actions to prevent and detect its presence in New York State is vital in keeping our deer populations healthy.

### **CWD is fatal to deer.**

Once a deer is infected, it will die. There is no known resistance, vaccine, or treatment.

### **CWD negatively impacts deer populations.**

In one area of Wyoming where CWD has been present for several decades, high prevalence (33%) in white-tailed deer caused a 10% annual decline in the population.<sup>1</sup>

### **CWD decreases deer life expectancy.**

In Colorado, CWD-infected mule deer live on average just 1.6 years versus 5.2 years for uninfected animals.<sup>2</sup> White-tailed deer infected with CWD are 4.5 times more likely to die than non-infected.

### **CWD spreads geographically, and its prevalence increases with time.**

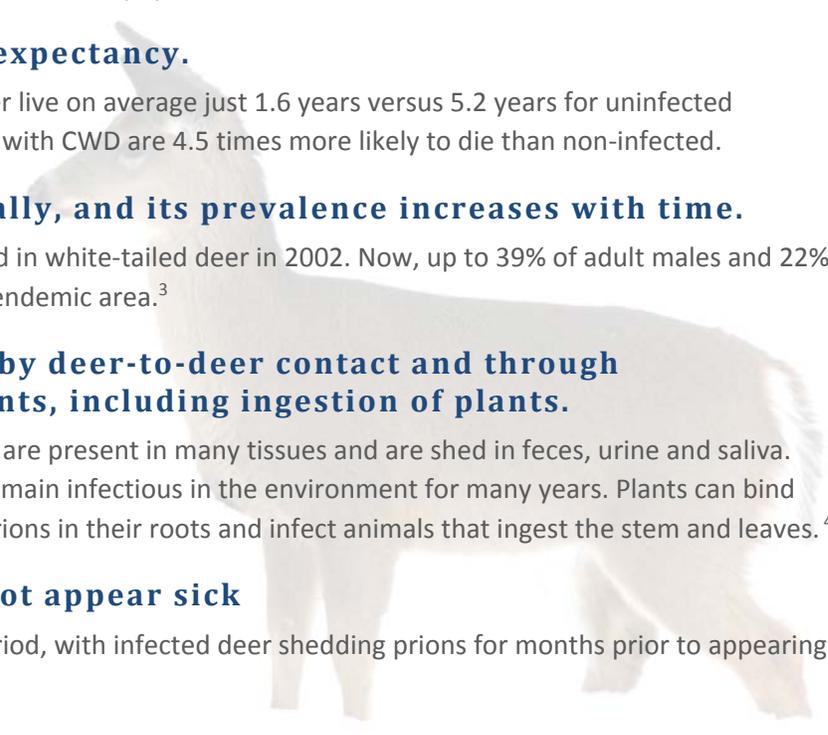
In Wisconsin, CWD was first detected in white-tailed deer in 2002. Now, up to 39% of adult males and 22% of adult females are infected in the endemic area.<sup>3</sup>

### **CWD is transmitted both by deer-to-deer contact and through contaminated environments, including ingestion of plants.**

Prions, the infectious agent of CWD, are present in many tissues and are shed in feces, urine and saliva. They can bind to soil particles and remain infectious in the environment for many years. Plants can bind prions on their leaves and take up prions in their roots and infect animals that ingest the stem and leaves.<sup>4</sup>

### **CWD-infected deer may not appear sick**

CWD has a prolonged incubation period, with infected deer shedding prions for months prior to appearing ill.<sup>5</sup>



# PREVENTION AND DETECTION

No cases of CWD have been detected in New York State since 2005, but cases have been discovered in multiple other states in the past year. The best approach for protecting New York's deer is to keep infectious material out of the state.

## Actions *You* Can Take

### Follow CWD regulations (6 NYCRR Part 189)

[www.dec.ny.gov/regs/3926.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/regs/3926.html)

- **Know the rules when importing hunted deer, elk or moose.**  
[www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8325.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8325.html)
- **Don't import an intact trophy head or intact deer carcass from outside New York.**

Certain parts, including the brain and some internal organs are a risk for transmitting the disease. Deboning meat will remove these parts. Consult a taxidermist for specific instructions on how to prepare a head for mounting and to be in compliance with the CWD regulations.

- **Don't use real deer urine. Prions are found in deer urine.**  
Most commercial deer urine is collected from captive deer farms. Choose synthetic alternatives to avoid potentially spreading CWD in your hunting area.
- **It is illegal to feed wild deer in New York State.**

### Dispose of carcasses properly.

Solid waste regulations NYSDEC part 360, [www.dec.ny.gov/regs/4415.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/regs/4415.html) require businesses (taxidermists & meat processors) to dispose of deer carcasses in a municipal landfill. Hunters can help by disposing of carcasses in a landfill to prevent environmental contamination.

### Report violators.

If you discover that carcasses or parts of deer, elk or moose were brought into New York illegally, call an Environmental Conservation Officer.

### Report sick deer or deer behaving abnormally.

Contact your nearest NYSDEC regional wildlife office or environmental conservation officer to report such a deer's location.

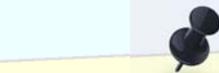
## Actions *NYSDEC* Is Taking

**Annually, NYSDEC collects and tests hunter-harvested deer for CWD.**

**NYSDEC responds to reports of sick wild deer and tests them for CWD.**

**NYSDEC enforces regulations to prevent importation and illegal disposal of potentially infected CWD material.**

**NYSDEC shares information on CWD with stakeholders.**



### Contact Information

**NYSDEC Regional Wildlife Office**  
[www.dec.ny.gov/about/50230.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/50230.html)

**Environmental Conservation Officer**  
**General Dispatch**  
1-877-457-5680

## NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Basil Seggos, Commissioner

August 2016

#### References:

<sup>1</sup> Edmunds D. et al. 2016. "Chronic wasting disease drives population decline of white-tailed deer" Plos One 11(8): e0161127/journal.pone.0161127

<sup>2</sup> Miller M., et al. 2008. "Lions and Prions and Deer Demise." Plos One 3(12): e4019.doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0004019

<sup>3</sup> <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/prevalence.html>

<sup>4</sup> Pritzkow S. et al. 2015. "Grass plants bind, retain, uptake, and transport infectious prions. Cell Reports 11.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.celrep.2015.04.036>

<sup>5</sup> Haley, N.J., et al. 2011. "Detection of Chronic Wasting Disease Prions in Salivary, Urinary, and Intestinal Tissues of Deer: Potential Mechanisms of Prion Shedding and Transmission." J. Virology 85:6309-6318. doi:10.1128/JVI.00425-11