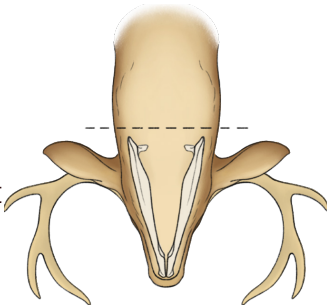


# Sampling deer for Chronic Wasting Disease

*Hunter-harvested deer can be tested for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) by extracting the medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes and sending them to a participating diagnostic lab. Determining the CWD status of deer can help you and those you share your harvest with make informed consumption decisions.*

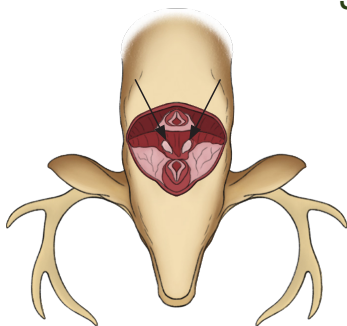
## Step 1

Make a cut through the throat about one inch back from where the lower jaw meets the neck. Extend this cut all the way through the windpipe. Stop just before you hit the spine.



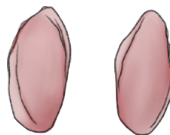
## Step 2

Feel and look for the lymph nodes. They will sit behind the windpipe and beside the tan, feathery salivary glands. They have a firm texture and can range in size from a marble to a small egg. They are often surrounded by several small purple structures called hemal nodes or "blueberries."



## Step 3

Put each lymph node in a separate bag labeled with information about the deer (e.g., location of harvest, tag number, date, sex). Freeze the bags.



## Step 4

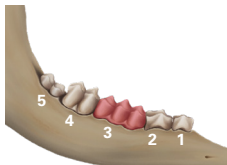
Clean your knife by rinsing off the debris and then soaking it in a 40% household bleach solution (2 parts bleach, 3 parts water) for five minutes.



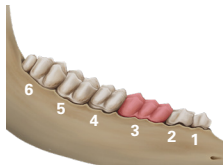
## Step 5

Submit your sample through the Hunter Submission Pathway offered in partnership with the Iowa DNR and the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

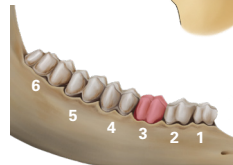
*Agencies and researchers tracking CWD are often interested in the age of deer being tested. To determine the age of your deer, inspect the teeth in the lower jaw.*



**Fawns** have four or five cheek teeth and three cusps on their third pre-molar.



**Yearlings** have six cheek teeth and three cusps on their third pre-molar.



**Adults** have six cheek teeth and two-cusps on their third pre-molar.

**IOWA STATE  
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Veterinary Diagnostic  
Laboratory



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<https://iowadnr.gov/huntersubmission>