



# Chronic Wasting Disease Test Sampling Kit

A deer with CWD will only begin to look sick in the late stages of the disease, several months after it has been infected.

Most positive deer found in North Dakota appeared healthy when they were harvested. The only way to determine if your animal is infected with CWD is by getting it tested.

Testing information is also critical for determining the distribution of CWD and evaluating the success of the Department's management strategy.

To have your deer tested, you can either drop off its head at one of the [Department's drop-off sites](#), or [request a sampling kit](#) and follow the directions on this page to send in a sample for testing.

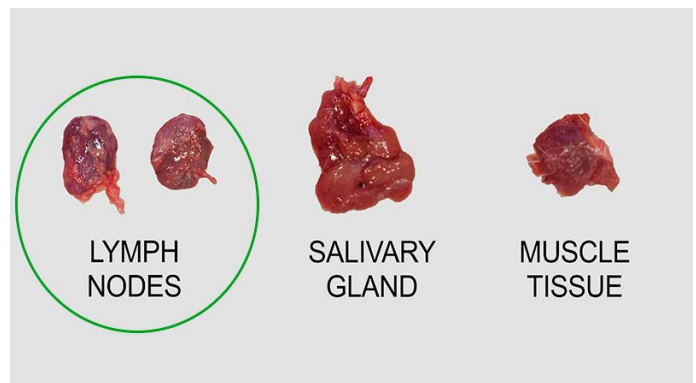
## How to Sample Lymph Nodes

### Supplies

- Sampling Kit
- Sharp knife
- Plier or a multitool (to grip the lymph nodes)
- Gloves
- Before you begin, **fill out your labeled Whirlpack** with the required information. This will allow the Department to contact you when results are made available.

### Identifying Lymph Nodes

- The lymph nodes are typically the size of a pea to a grape, can be gray to purple, and will feel firm compared to the surrounding areas.
- They will also have a smooth outside texture which can help you distinguish them from salivary glands, which look like chewed bubblegum, or muscle, which looks like meat.



## Locating the Nodes Needed for CWD Sampling

- Specific lymph nodes located at the back of the throat are needed for CWD sampling.

### Step 1

Position the deer so that the nose is pointed away from you and the top of the head is facing downward and feel for the back of the lower jawbone.



### Step 2

Following right behind the jawbone, make a deep cut through the soft portion of the throat. Be sure to cut all the way down to the spine.



### Step 3

Stretch open the head and neck joint to expose the structures.



### Step 4

The lymph nodes will be located just below and to the outside of the trachea (or windpipe) and above the bone and muscle tissue.



### Step 4a

You may have to cut away a bit of the muscle and other soft tissue to locate them, or they may be visible immediately depending on the exact location of your cut.



### Step 5

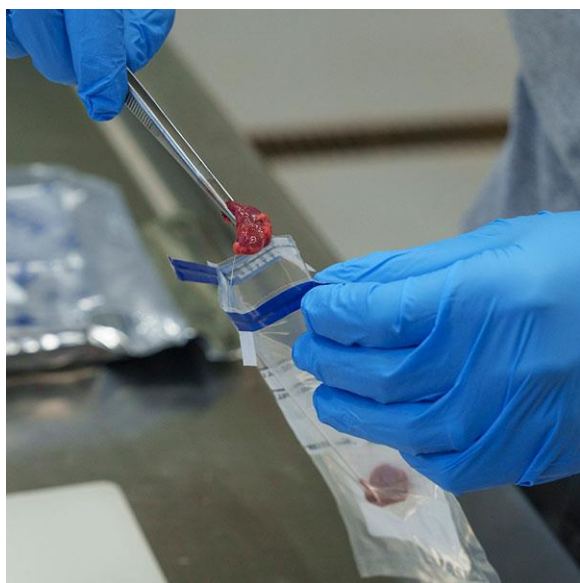
After locating the lymph nodes, cut them loose from the surrounding connective tissue. If you accidentally cut into the lymph nodes or cut them in half, that is okay.



## Lymph Node Shipping

### Step 1

Place lymph nodes into your **labeled** Whirlpack.



### Step 2

Fold the top of the Whirlpack four times and bend in the wire tabs.



### Step 3

Place the Whirlpack into the quart sized plastic baggie.



### Step 5

Ensure the ice pack is frozen and place it in the insulated mailer.



## Mail or Drop Off Sample

If you happen to live near a Game and Fish office, the mailer can be dropped off during business hours to shorten turnaround time.

Otherwise, it can be placed in a USPS mailbox where it will be sent to the Game and Fish lab. Postage is pre-paid. Please mail your sample on Monday or Tuesday to ensure it arrives at our laboratory as quickly as possible.

### Step 4

Place the baggie with the sample in the insulated mailer.



### Step 6

Seal the insulated mailer.



## Results

Results can be expected within 4 weeks from when the lymph nodes are sent. They will arrive via your [North Dakota Game and Fish Account Inbox](#).

Please contact the Department at 701-204-2161 if you have any questions about CWD sampling.