

Zombie Deer Disease

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Zombie Deer Disease Latest News

Health officials in Florida recently have confirmed cases of Chronic Wasting Disease, commonly known as “Zombie Deer Disease.”

About Zombie Deer Disease

- Known scientifically as **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**, it is a **progressive and fatal neurological disease** which **primarily affects deer, elk, moose, and reindeer**.
- It **affects the central nervous system** (the brain and the spinal cord).
- **What causes CWD?**
 - CWD is caused by **infectious proteins called prions**.
 - Prions are unique in that they **don't contain DNA or RNA**, unlike bacteria or viruses.
 - Instead, they are **misfolded proteins** that **cause other proteins in the brain to likewise misfold**, ultimately leading to **brain damage**.

- Once these proteins accumulate in the brain, they create spongy holes in the tissue, resulting in severe neurological dysfunction.

- **Transmission:**

- **CWD prions are highly contagious** and **spread through body fluids** such as saliva, feces, blood, or urine, either by **direct contact or environmental contamination**.
- **Once present** in an area, prions **remain infectious in soil, water, and plants for years**, posing long-term risks to animal populations.

- **Symptoms:**

- It has an **extended incubation period averaging 18-24 months** between infection and the onset of noticeable signs. During this time frame, animals look and act normal.
- The most obvious sign of CWD is **progressive weight loss**.
- Numerous **behavioral changes** have also been reported, including decreased social interaction, loss of awareness, and loss of fear of humans.
- Diseased animals also may exhibit increased drinking, urination, and excessive salivation.
- **In the final stages** of disease, **animals become debilitated and ultimately die**.
- How fast CWD progresses depends on the species and the animal's genetics.

- **Treatment:** It is **always fatal** in infected animals. There is **no vaccine or treatment**.

- **Can Humans Get CWD?**

- So far, there has been **no confirmed case of CWD transmission to humans**. However, experts remain cautious.

Source: [TN](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/zombie-deer-disease/>

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