

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Testing Sampling Guidelines

1. Preparation

- a. You will need to provide your own shipping supplies including: a hard-sided shipping container or cooler, a gel ice pack, and zip-top bags.

2. Cost Table (ELISA)

You have the choice to submit lymph nodes that have been extracted from your deer's head (**preferred**) or to submit the entire deer head. The extra cost for whole head submission covers lymph node extraction and head disposal by the WVDL. You will be invoiced for payment after testing is complete.

3. Lymph Node Submission

- a. Remove lymph nodes from deer head using the provided references (Appendix A and instructional video). If you are having trouble locating lymph nodes, remove the entire area shown in the pictures.
 - i. There may be a taxidermist in your area that can remove lymph nodes for a small fee.
- b. Once both of the lymph nodes are removed, double bag them using zip-lock bags and seal closed. If you have multiple deer you want tested, each set of lymph nodes must be packaged in separate zip-lock bags.
- c. Label each outer zip-lock bag with the following information:
 - i. Date of collection
 - ii. Landowner and hunter name (first and last name)
 - iii. Sample number, starting with #1. (Based on the number of samples you are submitting. For example, if you are submitting samples from 3 deer you would label each with a new number: #1, #2, #3)
- d. Place the bags containing lymph nodes in the freezer until it is time to ship to prevent decomposition during holding and shipping. The samples **must** be frozen before shipping.

4. Whole Head Submission

- a. Remove the head from the carcass leaving about 4 inches of the neck attached.
- b. Double-bag the head in plastic bags and tie off or zip tie each bag to seal.
- c. Label each outer bag (prior to placing the head inside) with the following information:
 - i. Date of collection
 - ii. Landowner and hunter name (first and last name)

- iii. Sample number, starting with #1. (Based on the number of samples you are submitting. For example, if you are submitting samples from 3 deer you would label each deer with a new number: #1, #2, #3)
- d. Freeze the head until ready to ship.

5. Packaging Submissions

- a. On day of shipment, place frozen lymph nodes or head in a hard-sided shipping container or cooler.
- b. Complete a CWD Test Submission Form found here: <https://www.wvdl.wisc.edu/forms/> for **each** sample being submitted. The submission form must be filled out completely to proceed with testing.
 - i. The numbers on the form must match the information on the zip-top bag(s).
 - ii. Place the (folded) submission form(s) in a separate zip-top bag and place it in the shipping container with the sample(s).
- c. Include a frozen ice (gel) pack to keep the sample cool. Please do not use regular ice as it will melt and cause damage to the included materials.
- d. Pack the container with paper towel or newspaper to keep contents from shifting.

6. Sample Shipping

- a. On the day of shipment, the submitter must notify WVDL by emailing [tse.coordinators@wvdl.wisc.edu](mailto:tse coordinators@wvdl.wisc.edu) and submissions@wvdl.wisc.edu including the number of samples and the shipment tracking number.
- b. Samples should ONLY be shipped Monday through Thursday to avoid the package sitting over the weekend and sample decomposition.

7. WVDL Testing and Reporting

- a. CWD Results may take up to two weeks to be reported back to the submitter.
- b. CWD test results will be reported by the WVDL to the submitter, the DNR, and any additional email addresses provided on the submission form.

8. References to help with pulling lymph nodes for CWD testing

- a. See Appendix A in this document or this instructional video on removing lymph nodes: <https://youtu.be/lc-lRqzoFKs>

9. Inquiries

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Appendix A. Removing Lymph Nodes for CWD Testing Submission

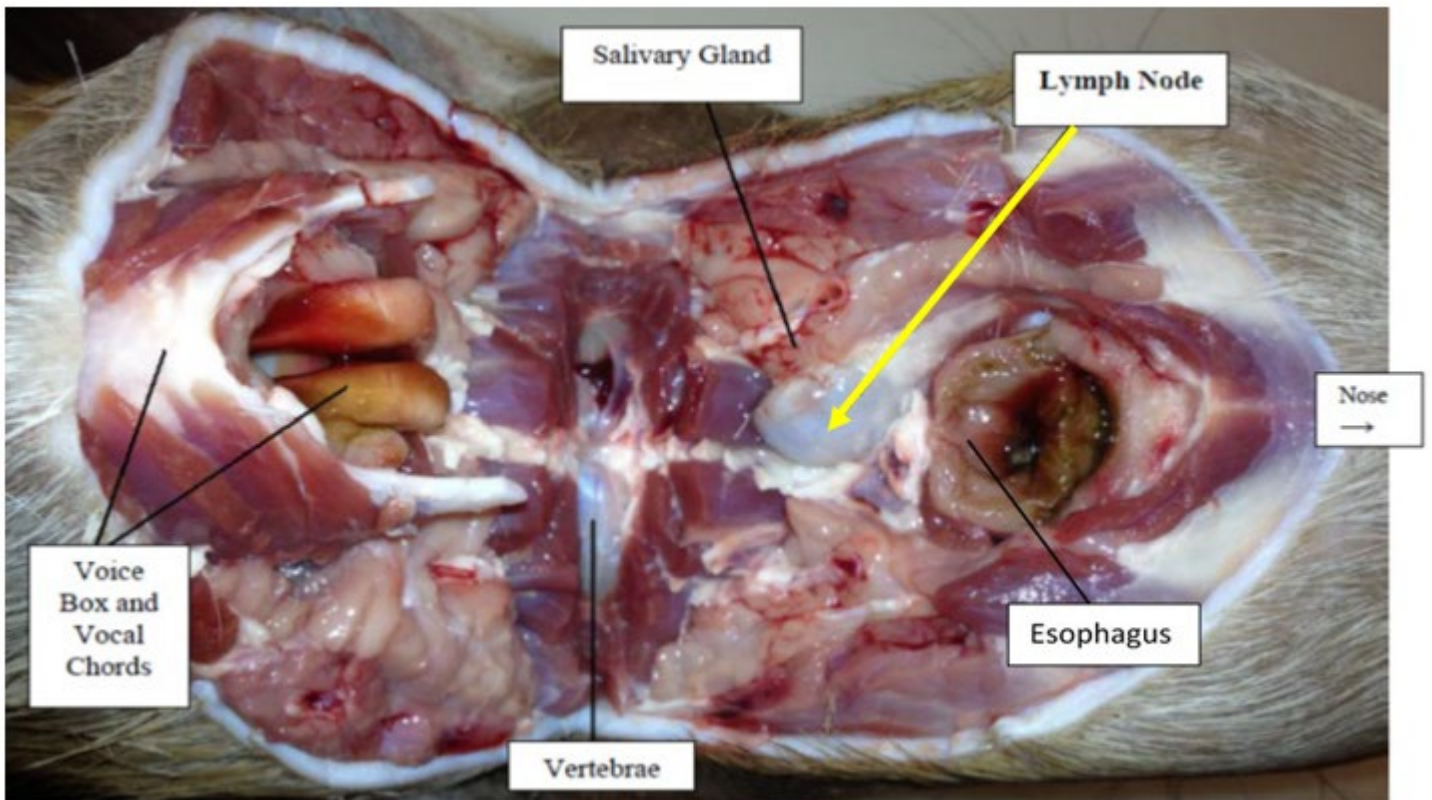


Step 1. Locate the larynx approximately where the neck bends.



Step 2. Make a U-shaped cut across the neck toward each ear. Your incision should be just behind the jawbone.

Step 3. Grasp the larynx and cut back toward you exposing the esophagus opening shown below. The lymph nodes will sit in a pocket to the lower left and lower right of the esophagus. Grasp each node with forceps and cut away at surrounding tissue. Try to remove both nodes as intact as possible.



Proper Tissue: Medial Retropharyngeal Lymph Nodes



Lymph nodes can come in many different sizes and colors, but always look bean shaped and sit in pockets near the center of the throat. The nodes will be firm and retain their shape when gently pressed against a hard surface.

Please note that if tissue other than medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes are received, a test cannot be performed, and a refund will not be offered. However, a credit can be applied to the client account for future testing. If you are ever unsure that you are collecting the correct tissue, please refer to the above photos, use the videos listed in the references section, you can cut out that section of the throat shown in Step 3, or you may send the entire head at additional cost.