

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Sample Collection

(Brainstem and lymph nodes)

Adapted from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Veterinary Services and Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory.

Figure 1 (photo c/o Indiana DNR)

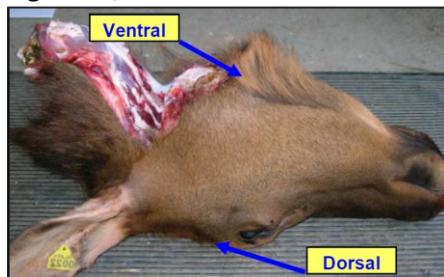


Figure 2 (photo c/o Indiana DNR)

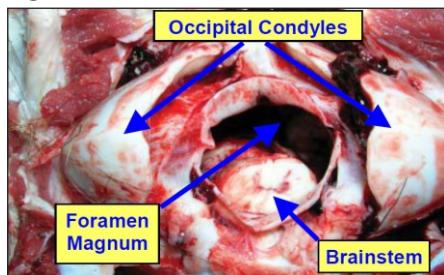
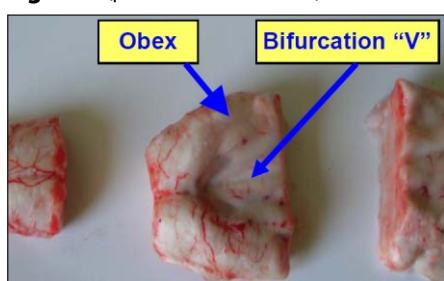


Figure 3 (photo c/o Wyoming State Vet Lab)



Figure 4 (photo c/o Indiana DNR)



Sampling procedure for obex/brainstem

1. Remove the head at the atlanto-occipital joint (between skull and first vertebra). Cut behind the back of the ears and extend along the angle of the jaw.
2. Position the head upside down (**Figure 1**). Locate the occipital condyles and foramen magnum (opening into brain). Locate the brainstem inside the foramen magnum (**Figure 2**). When cutting through the first joint, make sure to cut through the brainstem.
3. Gently lift the brainstem with forceps and insert sharp narrow blade or scalpel into the braincase to cut the brainstem as far forward as you can reach (**Figure 3**). The desired piece of brainstem (obex) is at least one inch inside the skull in a deer and a little further in an elk or moose.
4. Remove the brainstem using forceps and gravity. Examine to ensure the proper obex sample (V or Y shape) is preserved (**Figure 4**). Cut out this piece with a sharp knife.

Equipment needed:

Gloves, sharp narrow blade knife or scalpel, forceps, plastic container (preferred) OR Whirl-Pak OR Ziploc bag, permanent marker or labels, ice packs, cooler, bleach

Figure 5 (photo c/o MN DNR)

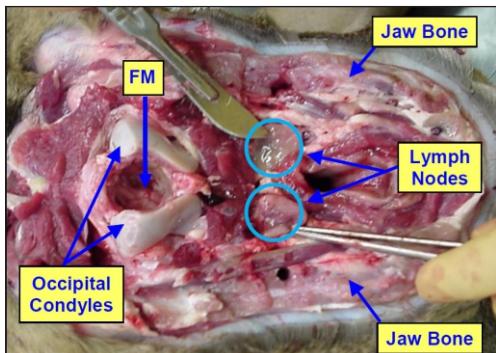


Figure 6 (photo c/o Wyoming State Vet Lab)



Sampling procedure for retropharyngeal lymph nodes

1. With the head positioned upside down, locate the trachea (windpipe) and foramen magnum (opening into skull).
2. Lift the trachea and dissect the muscles between the trachea and foramen magnum on either side of the midline.
3. The retropharyngeal lymph nodes are located on either side deep in the space half way between the pharynx (throat/trachea) and the foramen magnum (with head upside down) (**Figure 5**). The lymph nodes are round or oval and much firmer and rounder than the surrounding tissue. They are about the size of a peanut to an almond in a deer and larger in elk and moose (**Figure 6**).

Sample submission procedure

1. Package lymph nodes and brainstem in a Whirl-Pak, Ziploc bag or plastic container.
2. It is best to keep samples in a sturdy container to prevent crushing. Freeze samples as soon as possible and keep them on ice during transportation.
3. Go to cwdxsk.ca to fill out an online submission form. You will receive a CWD tracking number. Write your CWD tracking number on the bag/container. Keep a copy of this number for your records.
4. Deliver samples to a CWD drop-off location (freezer). For a list of drop-off locations, please visit saskatchewan.ca/cwd.
5. Clean your knife/instruments with soap and water and disinfect by soaking in 50 per cent bleach solution for least 30 minutes.
6. Double bag remaining carcass parts and dispose of in [designated carcass disposal site](#) or an ap-proved landfill.



Watch a video of how to collect your sample for CWD testing.
To scan, open the camera app on your phone and hold it over the QR code - a link will appear which you can click. This will take you directly to the video.



Register your submission and generate a tracking number for your sample

More info?

Contact the Ministry of Environment Inquiry Centre at
Tel: 1-800-567-4224 (toll-free in North America)
or 306-787-2584.
Email: centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca