

Sick Deer? Here's What To Do



There's an abandoned baby deer.

What can I do?

Mother deer often leave their fawns alone in a place they feel is safe. Please leave the fawn alone. More than likely, the mother is nearby and will be back later in the day. Any attempts to aid the fawn could delay the mother's return.

I found a dead deer in the water.

What should I do?

Please visit www.tn.gov/twra/sickdeer and report the incident. This may be an issue of hemorrhagic disease (HD), which we do monitor. HD is transmitted via biting midge and is not transmissible to humans. While we are not able to get out and run definitive tests on every deer found dead, we do know that HD occurs somewhere in Tennessee every year and is more common during warmer weather. Besides CWD, HD is the most significant disease affecting deer and, unfortunately, there is not anything which can be done about it. Thankfully, it is seasonal since the biting midges that transmit the disease usually die during the first hard frost. We encourage reports of HD to be able to measure its impacts and give us an opportunity to rule out CWD because visible signs/symptoms of the disease are similar.

There is a deer that is sick or injured

- Treatment of sick or injured deer is highly unsuccessful and dangerous to the deer and the person trying to help.
- The additional stress/injury on the animal preclude safe treatment making matters worse.
- Very few rehabilitators are able to work with deer. However, some are able to work with very young fawns. You can find information here: <https://www.tn.gov/twra/law-enforcement#rehabilitators>.
- You can report thin, ill, or oddly behaving deer here: www.tn.gov/twra/sickdeer. Most reports don't necessitate an on-site visit by TWRA and the volume of reports precludes the agency

from responding to all incidents. However, all reports are reviewed by a biologist to evaluate the severity of the circumstances. If the reviewing biologist determines an attempt for disease sampling is warranted and the contact information was included in the report, the biologist may contact the person who reported the sick/injured deer for more information. While we are not able to go out and check on every report, this helps give us a better idea of what diseases and other issues are affecting deer across the state. Citizen reporting is incredibly beneficial in helping us with early detection and disease monitoring as we can- not be everywhere all the time.

Please fill out all fields including location and, if possible, include high-quality photographs of the animal.

There is a deer with large black masses on it. What's wrong with it?

- The deer may have a large number of ticks.
- It may also be fibromatosis. This is a common skin condition of white tailed deer and other cervidae in North America. Fibromas are not known to affect humans.

There is a very skinny deer in my area. Does it have chronic wasting disease?

- Not necessarily, but please report it anyway. CWD is not a disease that can be diagnosed just by looking at a deer. Skinny deer may have insufficient nutrition or may have poor body conditioning. Pictures and other data (date, location) can be extremely helpful to us in determining what may be wrong. You can report any sick deer here. Pictures of the animal are extremely helpful.
- Currently, CWD has only been found in south-west TN. For the most up to date information, please visit: cwdintn.com.
- CWD is not known to be transmissible to humans, but the CDC recommends not consuming meat from deer testing positive for CWD.