

Guidance for Wildlife Rehabilitators on Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been detected in Georgia as of January 2025. The positive sample was collected from a hunter-harvested deer taken near the Lanier/Berrien County line as part of routine statewide sampling. The rehabilitation of fawns from CWD-positive counties poses a risk to other areas; therefore, the following measures must be taken to ensure that fawn rehabilitation continues to be permitted in the CWD Management Area.

If you take in and rehabilitate a fawn originating from Lanier or Berrien County, **you must:**

- Return the deer to the property of origin at weaning, **OR**
- Contact CWD@dnr.ga.gov to locate an appropriate release site.

CWD Information for Rehabilitators

- Why is it critical to return fawns to the property of origin?
 - Moving live deer to new areas is the single greatest risk for moving CWD to new areas. Returning fawns to the property of origin ensures that CWD is not unintentionally introduced to new areas.
- Are fawns from the CWD Management Area able to spread it to other fawns in the rehabilitation facility?
 - CWD has a long incubation period, typically 18 to 30 months. If fawns are exposed to CWD before becoming orphaned, they are unlikely to spread it to other fawns prior to weaning. Symptoms of CWD do not appear until the final stages of the incubation period, so deer with CWD may appear healthy for more than a year.
- I want to continue to take in fawns from the CWD Management Area. How do I properly sanitize my equipment after release?
 - After releasing fawns, any surfaces or items the deer came into contact with (e.g., bottles, food bowls, etc.) should be sanitized. First, wash the items and then soak them for 5 minutes in a 40% bleach solution. To prepare the solution, mix 2 parts household bleach with 3 parts water.

For more information about CWD, please visit <https://georgiawildlife.com/cwd>. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at CWD@dnr.ga.gov.

We appreciate your assistance in keeping CWD prevalence low.

For more information, scan the QR code or visit georgiawildlife.com/cwd.

