

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) of Deer

Hemorrhagic Disease is a general illness term for two related viruses: Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease virus (EHD) and bluetongue virus (BT). Hemorrhagic Disease (HD) primarily affects white-tailed deer and is causing a significant mortality event in northern Indiana. Sheep, cows, and goats are also susceptible. It is important to note that humans and dogs are **not** affected by this disease. According to Joe Caudell, head of the IDNR deer program, hunters that kill a deer and eat the meat are still not affected.

Clinical signs of HD begin 7 days after infection. You may see the deer exhibiting zero fear of humans and hovering near water resources. Fever causes deer to seek out water, so dead deer may be found near or in water. Deer infected with EHD may display unusual behaviors such as lethargy, excessive salivation or disorientation. The deer will die within 8-36 hours.

HD is transmitted to an animal host by midges, or tiny “no-see-ums” or sand gnats that are smaller than mosquitoes and other flies. A female *Culcoides* midge picks up the virus from the blood of an infected host (our host in the County Parks are deer). The midge then transmits the virus biting another host. The HD outbreaks occur in late summer and early fall when midges are active. The midges are often transported to new areas by wind. These midges and the viruses are killed within two weeks of the onset of frost ending the transmission cycle.

You can report deer found on your property at:

[DNR: Fish & Wildlife: Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease \(EHD\) \(in.gov\)](#)

An Indiana DNR biologist will review your report and contact you directly if more information or assistance is needed. Biologists use these reports to monitor the health of Indiana’s deer population. You can monitor suspect EHD cases and detections at [on.IN.gov/EHD](https://on.in.gov/EHD), where data is updated daily. If biologists are interested in sampling your deer, they will reach out for more information. For more information on [wildlife diseases](#) or resources on sick or dead animals, visit Cornell University’s website: <https://cwhl.vet.cornell.edu/disease/hemorrhagic-disease-deer>.