NEW YORK STATE | Department of Health

NOTICE

Ground venison could contain traces of lead from lead bullets.

Pregnant people and children should choose other healthy meats. Ground venison is suitable for adults who are not planning to get pregnant.

- Hunters across the state donate deer that are processed for food.
- Even though you can't see or feel it, ground venison from deer shot with lead bullets may contain small pieces of lead.
- Studies show that up to 20% of donated venison may contain lead from lead bullets. New York State is working with meat processors to reduce risk of lead contamination in packaged venison.
- New York State recommends that hunters use a bow and arrow or lead-free bullets when donating venison to reduce the risk to people.

A lead bullet with copper shell before and after firing.

A lead-free copper bullet and shell before and after firing.

Lead bullets break apart and can leave small pieces of lead in the meat. Lead-free, copper bullets do not break apart and are removed before packaging.

Lead and Your Health

- There is no safe level of lead for children or adults. Game shot with lead bullets are of greatest concern for young children and people who can get pregnant. Lead can harm a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn.
- Lead builds up in the body over a lifetime. Early symptoms of lead poisoning are easy to miss because they are similar to common problems such as tiredness, headache, poor appetite, and poor sleep.

Make Healthy Choices

- Venison is a locally-sourced lean protein that is suitable for adults not planning on getting pregnant.
- Families who have children or are planning to get pregnant should choose other healthy protein like chicken, fish, turkey, or pork.

Find venison recipes at wildharvesttable.com.

health.ny.gov/EatingGame | 518-402-7530

To order additional copies, contact CEHEDUC@health.ny.gov

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