

Heartbreaking pictures show deer with dozens of tumours covering its face and body

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Distressing photos have emerged showing a deer covered with huge tumours all over its face and neck. Photographer Julie Carrow had gone out to take some snaps in Pipestone, southwestern Minnesota when she spotted the deer as it walked past her.

PhotographerÂ Julie Carrow captured distressing images of a deer covered in tumours in Pipestone, southwestern Minnesota

She uploaded the "heartbreaking" photos to her Facebook page on July 25, writing: "This to me is just heartbreaking. Hoping this post will help this little man."

She added she'd contacted wildlife officials at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) so they could try to help the animal.

The disturbing pictures show the growths covering most of the deer's mouth and face and even appear to be covering its eyes.

Other large tumours can be seen on its neck and chest as well as its stomach and legs.

Carrow told City Pages: "He did not appear in any distress or malnourished, though I couldn't see his eyes."

Michelle Carstensen, from the DNR, told the paper the deer was suffering from severe case of fibromas - which is caused by a virus called papillomavirus, which is commonly known as HPV in humans.

She added that the growths are likely to be affecting the deer's vision and movement, making it easy prey for any predator.

"They are popularly referred to as skin tumours, or simply warts," the Department states on its website.

Fibromatosis is not known to cause mortality in deer and does not harm humans.

Carstensen said: "It's possible these will regress and he'll survive this. But it's also possible he becomes an easy prey item in the meantime."

Carrow said she had contacted state officials in a bid to help the animal

The Quality Deer Management Association appeared though to be more concerned with the impact the condition would have for people hunting the animal.

It said: "Its [fibromatosis] main significance lies in the consternation and concern experienced by the hunter who shoots a deer covered with ugly-looking lumps."

"Though they don't harm the meat, fibromas are repulsive to most persons and therefore render a fine trophy aesthetically undesirable."

- The Sun