



DISEASE INFORMATION SHEET

Summer Patch, (*Leptosphaeria korrae*)

Summer patch is a patch diseases caused by root pathogens that are problems of cool-season turfs. It attacks the roots of the grass in the Spring, leaving the grass weaker during the hot Summer months.



Symptoms and Signs

Symptoms of summer patch appear as circular, ring-shaped, or serpentine patches of dead or dying turf. Affected areas may be a few inches to a foot or more in diameter. These patches may at times coalesce, or they may stand out as individual dead rings. Leaves and stems of affected turf appear yellow or red, and then turn a light tan as the disease progresses. Roots and crowns of diseased plants are rotted and recovery of affected areas is slow. Summer patch seldom occurs in newly planted turf but can occur on turf that has been recently sodded. It may begin during the fourth or fifth year following seeding and can become progressively more severe.

Disease Pattern

Leptosphaeria korrae grows on the surface of grass roots for most of the growing season without causing visible symptoms. When conditions become favorable for the disease, the fungus attacks and destroys the roots. It is unknown if spores are responsible for transporting the pathogen from one area to another. Environmental conditions that favor summer patch may vary from one location to another. In some locations, the disease is more severe during the cool periods of spring and fall, whereas in other areas, the disease occurs only in midsummer.

Summer patch is generally more severe on drought-stressed turf, but can damage turf growing in moist soils as well

Cultural Control

To keep summer patch to a minimum, use cultural practices that reduce turf stress, such as irrigation during periods of drought stress and mowing lawn grasses at two inches or higher. *The most effective way to manage Summer patch in a home lawn is to use perennial ryegrass to overseed affected areas. Perennial ryegrass is highly resistant to this disease. Several seasons of aeration and overseeding will gradually eliminate this problem.*



Chemical Control

Fungicides rarely provide reliable control over Summer Patch disease.

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