

## Looking out for fish disease

As a fishery manager or a keen angler you need to recognise the first signs of fish disease. By identifying these signs you can take quick action and help prevent fish deaths.

However, a small number of fish showing unusual behaviour or disease symptoms does not necessarily mean that all your fish will die. Fish can sometimes recover without intervention. This is why it is important to regularly check the health of your fish. If the problem does not go away, or if it gets worse, then always seek advice from your local Environment Agency fisheries officer.

## What to look out for

By regularly checking the health and condition of your fish, you can detect problems early, before they start to die. There are a number of signs that you should look out for.

### Behavioural changes

These changes can be seen from the bank by anyone visiting the fishery and should be easy to spot. They include:

- sluggish behaviour (known as lethargy);
- gasping at the surface;
- congregating near inlets and outlets;
- reduced catch rates, suggesting that the fish are not feeding.

### Clinical symptoms

These symptoms can be seen by anglers when they catch fish or during routine netting operations.



A thin (emaciated) carp. This suggests that there is either not enough food in the fishery or the fish is unwell.



A carp with mouth damage possibly caused during hooking. If this gets worse it could stop the fish from feeding.



A roach with bulging eyes, caused either by infection or loss of water balance.



A carp with sunken eyes, caused either by emaciation or infection.



A carp with lesions, caused by a bacterial infection.



A carp with bleeding under the skin, caused by infection or physical damage.



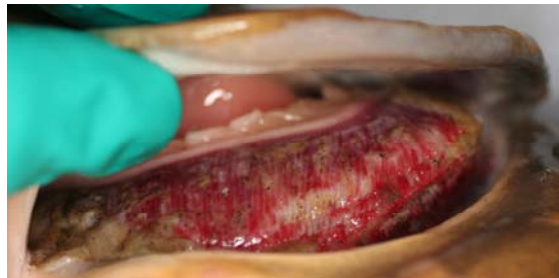
A carp with fin rot and an old lesion, probably caused by a bacterial infection.



A carp with a fungal infection on the body and excess mucus on the head.



A carp with fluid in the body cavity (known as dropsy), caused by bacterial infection or loss of water balance.



A carp with dead tissue (white tissue) in the gills, caused either by toxins and debris in the water or infection.

Most of these symptoms can be caused by several things including disease, poor water quality and physical damage (from rubbing while spawning, regular handling or predator attack). If you are unsure what is causing the problem get professional help.

**This fact sheet has been produced by:**

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