

- ▶ **Ulcers**
- ▶ **Slime Disease**
- ▶ **Hole in the Head**

Disease and injury prevention

General safety

1. Always follow the dosing instructions on any product label
2. Remove your filter carbon prior to treating
3. Do not use more than one disease treatment at a time (exception is aquarium salt and other treatments)
4. Keep all treatments out of reach of children.

Quarantine tanks

A quarantine tank is really a necessity when you want to keep fish successfully. These can be reasonable to set up and can save you money and heartache in fish losses.

The tank capacity should be 20L to 50L and should be fitted with an internal filter and 50Watt heater (for tropical fish). You should also use a separate fish net.

There is no need for substrate but an ornament or plant to give security can be added.

Your quarantine tank needs to be "cycled" as per your normal tank.

General prevention of fish diseases

1. Regular 20% water changes fortnightly
2. Regular water chemistry testing
3. Daily temperature check
4. Care with nets to avoid cross contamination
5. Make sure that your ornaments have no sharp edges
6. Daily observation of your fish behaviour
7. Wash, rinse and dry your hands well prior to and after interacting with your aquarium.

Treating your tank with aquarium salt

Aquarium salt is unlike table salt, it contains no iodised or anti-caking materials. The only products in aquarium salt are 100% salt or Sodium Chloride.

There are precautions you need to take when treating your aquarium with salt:

- ▶ Always follow the dosage quantities on the package
- ▶ Know the capacity of your tank
- ▶ Once you have dosed your tank and you do a water change top up the salt to the water change quantity e.g. if you do a 50% water change dose 50% of the required amount

These fish do not tolerate salt:

- ▶ Smooth skinned scaleless Catfish
- ▶ Corydoras
- ▶ Loaches
- ▶ Snails

Caution is also required with your aquatic plants.

This is why it is always a good idea to have a separate quarantine tank available for treatment of new or sick fish.

Place new fish into a quarantine tank for 2 weeks prior to introducing them to your established aquarium – hidden diseases will manifest in this period. Treatments are available from your local store. Ask your vet or Petbarn staff member which one is appropriate for your fish.

Using a test kit at home is the easiest way to monitor your aquarium's health, and keep your fish happy.

Did you know?

Healthy water = healthy fish!
This statement is never truer than when talking about aquarium fish.

Diseases in fish are not uncommon but occur predominantly when water conditions are poor.

Hole in the Head

This disorder most commonly affects Cichlids, and in particular Discus and Oscars. The cause of this disorder is not entirely clear. Contributing factors are vitamin deficiencies, poor quality food and unhealthy water conditions.

The lesions appear initially as small pits in the head and on the lateral line.

Treatment:

- ▶ Check your water conditions; chemistry as well as pH and water temperature
- ▶ Perform a 30% to 50% water change
- ▶ Improve the diet by adding vitamin rich foods such as high quality flake food
- ▶ Add a vitamin supplement
- ▶ Add AquaPlus or StressCoat to improve the slime coating and aid in healing
- ▶ If things don't improve you may need to seek the advice and a prescription from your vet.

Prevention:

- ▶ Maintain good quality water conditions
- ▶ Feed vitamin rich or enhanced food
- ▶ Improve your filtration

Ulcers

Ulcers in fish are an inflammation of the external tissues which look like "sores" or ulcers on the fish. They most commonly affect cold water fish such as goldfish.

These can be caused by: physical injury, parasites, bacterial erosion, bacterial sepsis, bacterial infection or chemicals contained in poor water chemistry such as high ammonia, nitrite and high or low pH levels.

It is important to determine whether one fish is damaged; which indicates that the individual fish has the problem, or there are several fish that are damaged indicating



a general environmental problem.

Treatment:

Dependent on the cause and extent of the ulcers and affected fish.

- ▶ Check your water conditions; chemistry as well as pH and water temperature
- ▶ Perform a 30% to 50% water change
- ▶ Remove your filter carbon before adding medication
- ▶ Remove the affected fish into a quarantine tank if this is possible
- ▶ Treat with Melafix and follow the dosage instructions on the label
- ▶ Add aquarium salt (not suitable for scale less fish)
- ▶ Depending on the severity of the infection you may have to seek advice from your vet
- ▶ Change your nets to avoid transference of infection

Slime Disease

This parasitic disease is characterised by an over production of mucus coating. The symptoms include a grey / white to blue looking mucus coat and rapid breathing (gilling).

Like most fish diseases this occurs when fish become stressed. Stress can be exacerbated by poor water conditions, overcrowding, malnutrition or sudden changes in temperature.

If the mucus coat covers the fish's gills they can suffocate to death; so quick treatment is essential.

Treatment:

- ▶ Check your water conditions; chemistry as well as pH and water temperature
- ▶ Perform a 30% to 50% water change
- ▶ Remove your activated carbon before adding any treatments
- ▶ Treat with Furan 2 or Melafix
- ▶ Aquarium salt can be beneficial but use with caution.

Prevention:

- ▶ Monitor and maintain healthy water chemistry
- ▶ Observe your fish daily for signs of stress
- ▶ Don't overcrowd your tank
- ▶ Feed a good quality food
- ▶ Maintain an appropriate water temperature
- ▶ Improve your filtration

Did you know?

Poor water conditions cause fish to very easily become stressed and this makes them far more susceptible to infection.

