



Turf

Sclerotinia Dollar Spot

Pest **41**
Fact
Sheet

Introduction

Dollar spot affects most of the cool-season grasses such as bluegrass, ryegrass, fescue and bentgrass.

Description

The overall symptom pattern for Sclerotinia dollar spot varies with mowing practices. Under close mowing (as on golf greens) the disease progresses from very small initial spots of dead turf to distinctly circular, straw-colored areas 2"-3" in diameter, sharply outlined against the surrounding healthy grass. Patches may coalesce into larger irregular patches.

On taller turf typical of residential lawns, irregularly-shaped, straw colored areas of dead grass appear, ranging from 2"-6" diameter. Under ideal conditions, the patches may coalesce to cover large areas. When large areas are infested, the disease is often mistaken for drought injury.

Affected individual grass leaves first show yellow-green blotches that become water-soaked and finally bleach to a straw-color with reddish-brown margins. Lesions usually extend across the entire leaf, and dieback of the leaf from the tip to the lesion is common. In the early morning hours, while dew is still present on the leaves, a cobwebby white, fungal growth may appear on infected leaves.

Disease cycle

The causal fungus overwinters in the crowns and roots of infected grass plants as mycelium (fungal threads) or thick-walled crusts of fungus termed *sclerotia*. In the early summer when the temperature reaches 60°F, the organism begins growing, reaching a peak of activity during humid weather with temperatures from 70°F to 80°F. The pathogen spreads to new areas primarily by transport of infected plant material with mowers, traveling irrigators, water and other maintenance equipment.

Grass growing under low soil moisture conditions is more susceptible than when adequate soil moisture is provided. Hence, severe outbreaks of the disease can and do occur during seasons of low rainfall. Sclerotinia dollar spot is less of a problem on turf growing in soil with high nitrogen fertility. However, research shows that resistance to the pathogen actually decreases with increased nitrogen nutrition fertility and that the beneficial effect of high nitrogen nutrition is due to faster plant recovery during periods unfavorable for disease development. Soil pH does not influence disease development.

Cultural control

Maintain adequate to high nitrogen fertility. Water deeply and as infrequently as possible without causing moisture stress; water early in the day; do not mow wet grass and provide good air circulation. Seed with resistant varieties.

Chemical control

Fungicide applications are made from June to September. Systemics provide good residual control (4-6 weeks). Optimum control using protectants is achieved when fungicide applications are made at 7-14 day intervals during periods of disease outbreak. Consult your county Extension Educator (see county office telephone listing below) for specific pesticide recommendations.

Summary

Causal agent	Fungus
Plant parts attacked	Leaves
Major symptoms	Spots on leaves and patches in turf
Cultural control	Proper fertility, water management, resistant varieties
Time of first noticeable symptoms	Early summer
Spray program	Systemic fungicides; protectant fungicides
Number of applications per season	4 - 6

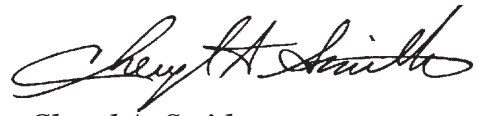
UNH Cooperative Extension County Office Telephone Numbers

Belknap (603) 527-5475	Carroll (603) 539-3331	Cheshire (603) 352-4550	Coos (603) 788-4961	Grafton (603) 787-6944
Hillsborough Goffstown (603) 641-6060	Merrimack (603) 796-2151	Rockingham Brentwood, NH 03833 (603) 679-5616	Strafford (603) 749-4445	Sullivan (603) 863-9200

Stop! It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. If unsure of registration status of a particular pesticide product, contact the NH Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550. Store pesticides in their original containers in a locked cabinet or shed away from food. Dispose of unused pesticides or empty containers safely, according to NH regulations. If you suspect pesticide poisoning, call the New Hampshire Poison Control Center at 1-800-562-8236.



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