

Cooperative Extension

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Symptoms

Black spot symptoms include round black spots with fringed margins on the upper surface of rose leaves. Yellow "halos" may surround the spots. Then the spots enlarge and coalesce and the leaves turn yellow and may fall. Purplish or black blisters on young canes also indicate infection. Flower production may be decreased. Severe infection may cause general weakening due to defoliation and greater sensitivity to winter cold that may lead to the death of the plant.

Causal Agent and Life Cycle

The fungus that causes black spot is *Diplocarpon rosae*. It infects only roses, and is a common and serious disease. The fungus overwinters on fallen leaves and diseased canes. The reproductive spores are spread by rain and splashing water. Infections are worst when plant surfaces are wet, humidity is high, and temperatures are high (over 70°F.) for several consecutive days. Symptoms appear within four to five days of infection and spores may be produced within two weeks allowing several infections each summer.

Prevention

Resistant cultivars should be planted in sites where there is good air circulation. Plants should be adequately maintained by proper pruning and disposal of dead material. Avoid wetting foliage when watering. Preventing the spread of black spot is of primary importance as once an infection is established there is no cure. However, the disease may be controlled using lime-sulfur as a dormant spray or applied every 7 to 14 days during the growing season.



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