

## Orchid Diseases Part 2

### Fungal Leaf/Flower Spot Diseases

#### Botrytis

Tiny black spotting on your orchid flowers is usually a sign of a fungus called Botrytis. It thrives in warm humid conditions with restricted air flow. The tiny spots can enlarge and even cover the entire flower if left untreated. Since the spotting is unsightly, prevention is the best option.

#### Cercospera

Cercospera causes leaf spotting on orchids and mainly affects Dendrobiums in the hot, humid summer months. Infection usually starts a light yellow circular spotting on the leaves that eventually develop necrotic areas within the spots. The spots quickly enlarge and can cause leaf drop.

#### Guignardia

Guignardia causes leaf spotting on orchids and is primarily seen on Vandas and Dendrobiums. It starts as small elongated dark-purple spots on the leaves or pseudobulbs. These spots may get larger and eventually may lead to leaf drop.

### To Treat Fungal Leaf/Flower Spot Diseases

Effective treatment of fungal leaf spot first requires removal of the infected tissue and reducing leaf moisture, followed by spraying a systemic fungicide. If you have plants that are prone to leaf spot infection, the regular use of a protectant fungicide may be helpful.

### In Conclusion

With proper care, many orchid diseases can be avoided.

- Keep your growing area clean
- Water only as needed (& as early in the day as possible)
- Feed regularly at recommended rates
- Space your plants well to make sure they have adequate air circulation
- Use clean and sterilized tools when handling your plants
- Remove and treat plants affected by pests immediately as it's a lot easier to treat just one plant

Rhizoctonia root rot is mainly associated with old, rotting potting media or damage caused by over-fertilization. It infects the plant roots causing them to go brown and decay.

#### To Treat Fungal Root Diseases

Treatment involves completely removing the old media from the roots, and well as any dead/decaying root matter, drenching the plant with a systemic fungicide and repotting in clean, fresh media.

