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“Your Home Turf Advantage”

COMMON LAWN FUNGAL DISEASES_PYTHIUM BLIGHT



Pythium Blight has a few nicknames such as grease spot, spot blight, or cottony blight. You can actually see why they might be called that, too, based on the above photos.

The primary grass species this fungal disease attacks is cool season grasses such as bluegrass, fescue, ryegrass, bentgrass and others.

The Pythium fungus can make grass look and feel wet and oily or rather slimy or greasy when rubbed between two fingers. In later stages, when the turfgrass is wet or where air circulation is poor, it can cause cotton candy-like fluffs of white or gray web-like mycelium to grow out of infected turf, especially on mornings with dew.

Pythium Blight is classified as a water mold. Outbreaks are generally associated with water-logged, poorly drained soils. It tends to follow surface drainage channels. It causes the worst damage to lawns in persistently hot and humid weather when there's little drying of the grass blades.

Overwatering during heat waves often creates conditions perfect for Pythium Blight. It's during these warm humid conditions when grass leaves are wet for at least 12 to 14 hours that this blight may occur. The disease can be particularly severe when daytime temperatures exceed 28°C (82°F) and night temperatures never fall below 20°C (68°F).

Initial symptoms appear as dark green to purple water-soaked leaves that cluster into circular or irregularly shaped patches. Then the grass starts to turn from green to light tan or light brown. The patches may even assume a reddish color if weather conditions become cooler and drier. And then as it gets more severe, infected grass will quickly brown, wilt, dry out and die.

Dead patches of grass can grow to be 15 cm (6 in) or more across. Patches of infected grass can enlarge and merge together, causing severe damage to lawns, golf courses and athletic field turf.

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Pythium Blight is easily spread by moving water and mechanical equipment. It can travel on the blades of a lawn mower and on the soles of shoes. It also loves over-fertilized, alkaline (pH over 7) soil with high levels of nitrogen and low levels of calcium.

PREVENTION/TREATMENT OPTIONS

As with most lawn diseases, Pythium Blight is easier to prevent than to cure. You can't do much about hot and humid weather, but you can take other steps to keep your lawn healthy and dry, and make it less hospitable to the fungus ---

- ✓ **If your lawn is already infected with Pythium Blight, you want to first contain the spread of the disease ---**
 - Your chance of restoring your lawn back to normal is best if you catch it at the oily-looking stage, before the grass turns streaky, patchy and brown.
- ✓ **Fertilize carefully, ideally with a periodic, balanced, slow-release formula.**
- ✓ **Water for longer periods of time, but less frequently (no more than once a week), and water early in the day.**
 - This way, grass blades have a chance to dry out before nightfall.
- ✓ **Power rake (de-thatch) your lawn to prevent and remove thatch buildup.**
- ✓ **Aerate your lawn to loosen compacted, poorly draining soil.**
- ✓ **After mowing, bag your grass clippings, or after aerating or de-thatching, wipe off your mower blades and tools as well as your shoes to prevent further spreading of the fungus.**
- ✓ **Block off the infected area from foot traffic.**
- ✓ **If needed, level out your lawn to minimize areas where water might otherwise pool.**
- ✓ **Fungicides are available for control of Pythium Blight (Mefenoxam, Daconil, Chlorothalonil, etc.)**
 - But they need to be applied prior to observing symptoms.
 - Once symptoms appear, fungicides are not nearly as effective in stopping this disease.

* GENERAL USAGE DISCLAIMER *

Please note that some of the above illustrative photos are SQLC's, and some are not. We do not claim ownership of every photo within this document. Nor does our inclusion of them, mean that any rightful owners of these photos necessarily agree with or endorse what we've written within this document. We therefore give credit to those who may be the original owners of these photos --- We've seen them likewise displayed on numerous lawn care websites without links to the original sources, so we're honestly not sure who may be the original photographers. That being said, if anyone wants to use our SQLC photos, they may do so, too, as we're totally fine with that --- Our purpose is nothing more than wanting to educate you about such lawn diseases. We gratefully acknowledge that the following photos, no matter who took them, are some near-perfect examples of various fungal diseases. Whoever photographed them, did so at the perfect time to clearly indicate the main and most obvious symptoms of the diseases --- Our hats go off to them for a job very well done. In utilizing them, we simply wanted to give you the best possible photographic examples of what these particular lawn diseases would look like, to help you identify and know what you're dealing with.

...Please see next page...

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***** SPECIAL NOTE *****

We love helping our clients have great-looking lawns! Of course, we always welcome your inquiries, but we also want to help educate you, too. So many of you have told us how much you appreciate the articles we make available to you.

If there are any questions you may have about your lawn or any challenges or problems you may occasionally encounter with your lawn, don't hesitate to give us a call. As with the above info article you've just read, we also have other highly beneficial lawn care articles, too...

Here are some we've created to support you with your lawn care efforts. They can help you identify any problems as well as offer some possible solutions for some of those occasional challenges lawns can encounter.

These info articles are not meant to be one-time definitive cures for whatever might ail your lawn. We all wish it was only that simple... But, there are no magic "spray this once and your lawn will be perfect thereafter" solutions... Unfortunately, those don't really exist, as much as we might all like them to. However, there are many things you can do to get your lawn in great shape and keep it that way. We encourage you to glean what you can from any of the following articles that may interest you. And for what you're not sure about, give us a call, let's talk about it, and we'll do what we can to help you.

You may reach us at 780-678-6450 if you'd like to receive any of these via email. It would be our pleasure to do our part to help you "make your lawn the envy of your neighbours"...

From Our "**PROACTIVE LAWN CARE**" Series Of Articles —

7 Steps To A Great Lawn

Caring For Our Lawn Over The Winter

Proactively Preparing Your Lawn For Drought Conditions

From Our "**WHAT YOU'RE NOT TOLD**" Series Of Articles —

What You're Not Told About All-Natural & Organic Lawn Care Alternatives

What You're Not Told About Bats & Their Guano

From Our "**WHY?**" Series Of Articles —

Why Is My Grass So Thin?

Why Dead Spots On My Lawn?

Why Am I Getting Mushrooms In My Lawn?

Why Are The Pine Needles Killing My Grass?

From Our "**HOW TO GET RID OF...**" Series Of Articles —

How To Get Rid of Ants

How To Get Rid of Dew Worms

How To Get Rid of Fairy Rings

How To Get Rid of Quackgrass

How To Get Rid of Thistles

From Our "**DAMAGE BY DOGS & OTHER CRITTERS**" Series of Articles —

Fixing & Preventing Dog Spots

Damage Caused by Voles

...See more on next page...

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From Our **“SEEDING LAWNS”** Series Of Articles —

Grass Seeding For New Lawns
Overseeding For Existing Lawns

From Our **“DIY”** Series Of Articles —

DIY_Alternate Ways To Remove Weeds In Gravel Areas

From Our **“COMMON LAWN FUNGAL DISEASES”** Series Of Articles —

Common Lawn Fungal Diseases (Compendium Of All Common Ones)
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_The Usual Causes
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Snow Mold
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Leaf Spot & Melting Out
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Ascochyta Turf Leaf Blight
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Brown Patch
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Summer Patch
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Pythium Blight
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Red Thread
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Rust Diseases
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Powdery Mildew
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Dollar Spot
Common Lawn Fungal Diseases_Fairy Ring

INFORMATION ON OUR FIVE PRIMARY LAWN CARE SERVICES —

FERTILIZER & WEED CONTROL:

Our Fertilization & Weed Control Program
Possible Reasons For Still Having Weeds
Ten Reasons Our Program is Different

ENRICH SOIL ENHANCER:

Our Enrich Soil Enhancer Program
Different Soil Types Have Different pH Levels

WEEKLY MOWING:

How The Weekly Lawn Mowing Works
Our Quality Control Program
Ten Reasons We Are Different

CORE AERATION:

Why Aerate Your Lawn?

POWER RAKING:

Why Power-Rake Your Lawn?

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