

CONTROL BROWN PATCH IN TURF

TREAT IT WITH FUNGICIDE

Brown Patch

The fungus *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuehn causes dead brown patches of grass. This disease affects ryegrasses, fescue, and bluegrass in Nebraska. Tan colored, irregular shaped leaf lesions with reddish, dark brown or purplish margins will be present on individual grass blades. Filmy white to tan tufts may cover blades in the early morning if the dew is heavy. This may almost look like spider webs over the turf. After two or three weeks, the center of the fungus damage may recover leaving a brown doughnut shape of dead grass. The roughly circular patches of dead grass can easily reach two feet in diameter.

Disease Cycle

Brown patch survives from year to year in the form of resting bodies of the fungus in plant debris and thatch. As average daily temperatures reach the mid 70's, they germinate and form fungal hyphae, which spread through the soil and thatch. During humid, hot weather, they grow on moist grass blades and enter the plant through mowing wounds and natural leaf pores. Brown patch occurs on dense heavily fertilized and watered turf in hot humid weather when night temperatures remain above 80 degrees.

Disease Management

- Avoid heavy, early spring and summer fertilization, especially with fast release-high nitrogen fertilizers
- Use slow-release nitrogen fertilizers or organic turf food
- Avoid fertilization of turf-grass grown in dense shade
- Remove and dispose of clippings (don't compost) from infected areas

or when conditions are conducive to disease development

- Prune woody landscape plantings and trees to allow for air movement and light
- Water only in the morning. Turf must be dry by evening
- Introduce new cultivars of disease resistant seed into existing turf
- Treat when disease is first noticed and repeat at least three times 10-14 days apart. Continue treating as long as hot humid nights are above 80 degrees
- Provide good surface and sub-surface water drainage to reduce humidity
- Aerate spring and fall. Apply Soil Activator to help break down thatch
- Maintain a very sharp mower blade and never mow wet grass

Effective Treatments

Granular products: Bayer Fungus Control for Lawns (Triadimefon) or Fertilome F-Stop (Myclobutanil)

Liquid Products: Fertilome Liquid Systemic Fungicide (Propiconazole) and F-Stop.

**Granular and Liquid applications provide the same results, always follow label instructions.

