

FISH PARASITES

ARE YOUR FISH BEING HIJACKED?

Parasites are everywhere and can be lurking in your aquarium without causing any significant problem. Although a parasite harms a host, it does not usually kill the host or it would eventually run out of a place to live. Like dogs, cats and other animals, fish may also be affected by parasites. Stressed or wounded fish are more susceptible to **fish parasites**, allowing them a chance to multiply and start attacking the healthier fish also in your tank or pond.

The best prevention against **fish parasites** is to provide a healthy, stress-free environment for your fish. Healthy fish are rarely affected by parasites. Proper maintenance, water conditions, nutrition and non-aggressive tank-mates are easy ways to reduce the threat of unwanted "hijackers".

Signs of External Fish Parasites

Watch your fish for a few minutes each day for these signs and behaviors:

- Itching (Yes, fish can itch, too!) Watch for rubbing against rocks, décor, sides & bottom of the tank or pond
- Difficulty breathing
- Sores, patches or injuries on the body
- Torn or jagged fins
- Lack of appetite
- Lethargic; unusual swimming behavior
- Hiding or being bullied by tank-mates



Identifying and treating infestations early is much easier and effective than curing severe **fish parasite** problems. Once parasites attack and penetrate the skin or gills, the fish is more susceptible to illnesses from bacteria, fungi and secondary infections.

Treatment Methods

Dipping your freshwater fish into a saltwater solution (and saltwater fish into freshwater) for three 5 minute treatments will dislodge many external **fish parasites**. Dipping is stressful for the fish, so observe and remove sooner if needed. Some **fish parasites** require special medications. ANIMART's Wet & Wild specialists can help you identify the specific **fish parasite** and determine the right medication to use for your type of fish. Some treatments may also kill off the beneficial bacteria in your tank. Monitor your water quality and filtration to avoid unwanted spikes.

Questions?

Think your fish might have parasites?

Contact ANIMART's Wet & Wild specialists at 608.242.2140 ext 4224 (Madison) or 920.885.2814 (Beaver Dam) for more information about keeping your fish healthy.