

Ich

What causes ich?

Ich is considered the common cold of fish. Just like germs that make humans sick, parasites are always present to attack fish. In a healthy situation a fish's normal immune system will protect it against these attacks.

When your fish becomes “stressed” its immune system drops and the Ich parasite is able affect your fish. There are 3 common causes of fish stress:

- 1) Ammonia. High ammonia levels are the #1 cause of stress and fish loss.
- 2) Temperature change of more than 3 degrees will cause stress. Having tropical fish in too cold of a tank, or goldfish in too warm of a tank will also lead to illness
- 3) Fish fighting eachother, especially between newer and older fish will also increase the chance of an ich outbreak.

What are the symptoms of Ich?

Tiny white dots that can appear on the body, fins or gills. These dots usually look like grains of salt. Fish infected with Ich generally can stay healthy for 5-7 days before they start to perish.

Why do new fish seem to get Ich more often?

New fish often catch the blame for causing Ich. In most cases, a new fish will show symptoms first because of the stress from being put into new water conditions it is not used to.

How do I treat Ich?

- 1) To treat Ich effectively you must first get rid of the stress that caused Ich. Always assume it is ammonia until you've ruled it out. The best method is to have your water tested to determine ammonia level. We will do that for you in our store, or you can purchase a test kit for your home. If you cannot get the ammonia tested within 24 hours of noticing the Ich, you should do a 33% water change just to be safe. Once the environment is corrected we can safely medicate the water.
- 2) It is best to raise the temperature to 80-84 degrees. This will make the Ich parasite more sensitive to medication.
- 3) Begin treatment with a proven Ich medication such as Coppersafe or Quick-cure.
- 4) Be sure to remove the carbon from your filter. Carbon will absorb some of the medication so it is best to run your filter without it at this time.
- 5) Treat until you do not see anymore dots for 48hrs. Do a 33% water change after medicating. Put a fresh carbon insert back in the filter.



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