

# Black Spot of Rose

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## INTRODUCTION

Black spot is the most common and serious disease of roses in Kentucky. It is a problem in greenhouse production and outdoor plantings.

## SYMPTOMS

Nearly circular black spots with feathery or irregular margins form on upper leaf surfaces (FIGURE 1). Individual spots vary in size and may expand to 1/2 inch; coalescing spots produce larger irregular lesions. Yellow halos may form around spots; entire leaves turn yellow and drop prematurely. Defoliation weakens plants and reduces flower production and quality.

Infections on canes are often inconspicuous; they first appear as raised, purple-red, irregular blotches that later become blackened and blistered.

## CAUSE & DISEASE DEVELOPMENT

Black spot is caused by the fungus, *Diplocarpon rosae*, which overwinters on infected canes and fallen leaves. At least 7 hours of leaf wetness is required for infection. After infection, symptoms may appear in as little as 3 days or may take up to 2 weeks, depending on weather conditions. Fungal spores are spread via splashing water.



**FIGURE 1.** BLACK CIRCULAR LESIONS WITH IRREGULAR MARGINS ARE TYPICAL OF BLACK SPOT. (PHOTO: WILLIAM FOUNTAIN, UK)

## DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- Plant rose cultivars that are tolerant or resistant to this disease.
- Provide sufficient spacing between plants to permit good air circulation.
- Avoid overhead irrigation that would contribute to leaf wetness and encourage disease.
- Protective fungicide sprays should be applied as soon as the growing season begins. Continue sprays at 7 to 12 day intervals until autumn; use the shorter intervals during wet seasons, but longer intervals may be adequate during dry weather.
- Once disease occurs, good sanitation practices are critical. Gather fallen leaves, and remove diseased canes well below lesions. Collect this debris and discard or destroy.