

CORAL DISEASE

REPORT SIGHTINGS & PREVENT SPREAD

Coral disease is an emerging issue on Hawaiian reefs. Help identify coral disease and prevent new outbreaks!

DECONTAMINATE YOUR GEAR



DIVE WITH CAUTION



Never touch corals

Practice good buoyancy



Rent gear locally

Contaminated gear can spread the disease



Dive on healthy reefs

Before diving on infected reefs

REPORT CORAL DISEASE



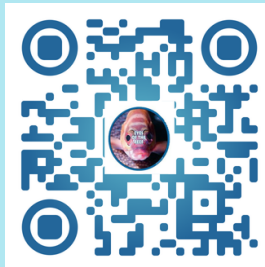
Take photos



Note dive site, coral location and date



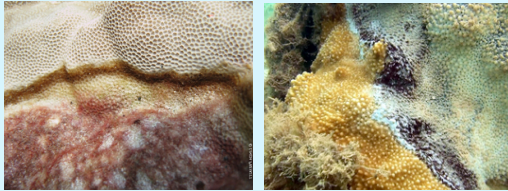
Share the information with <https://eorhawaii.org/make-a-report/>



HOW TO IDENTIFY CORAL DISEASE

Coral disease occurs naturally in the environment, but can be spread by divers and dive activities. Stress such as pollution, climate change, and disturbance can make corals more susceptible to disease.

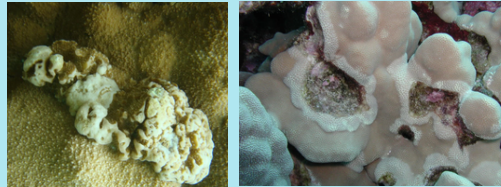
TISSUE DETACHMENT AND LOSS



Tissue detachment and loss is the most severe symptom of coral disease and can result in rapid coral mortality

- Look for bare, white skeleton
- A dark or black band can be present around diseased area
- Possible algal growth on older sections of the bare skeleton

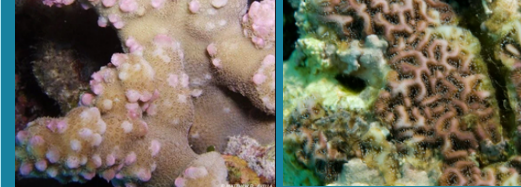
GROWTH ANOMALIES



Growth anomalies appear as bumps or raised areas of the coral skeleton and tissue. They often have a smooth texture and pale color

- Look for irregularly shaped growths with unique textures and pale color
- Coral damage is not widespread

DISCOLORATION



Coral disease can cause a change of color in coral tissue

- *Porites trematodiasis*: Coral polyps appear as swollen pink bumps
- *Pavona endolithic hypermycosis*: Purple patches on the coral colony

Other afflictions can be mistaken for coral disease:

Competition



- Invasive algae competes with native coral for light and space
- Overgrown coral tissue may be dead with no visible polyps

Predation



- Feeding scars are often circular, have visible bite marks, and bare white skeleton is exposed
- Scars are on most accessible parts of colony
- Bite marks will heal with time

Bleaching



- Coral will turn white or very pale, but polyps may still be present
- Bleaching occurs when zooxanthellae leave the coral, but the coral tissue may not die

Stress



- Stress is caused by changes in water conditions (temperature, light, and nutrients)
- May cause pink coloration and raised bumps

