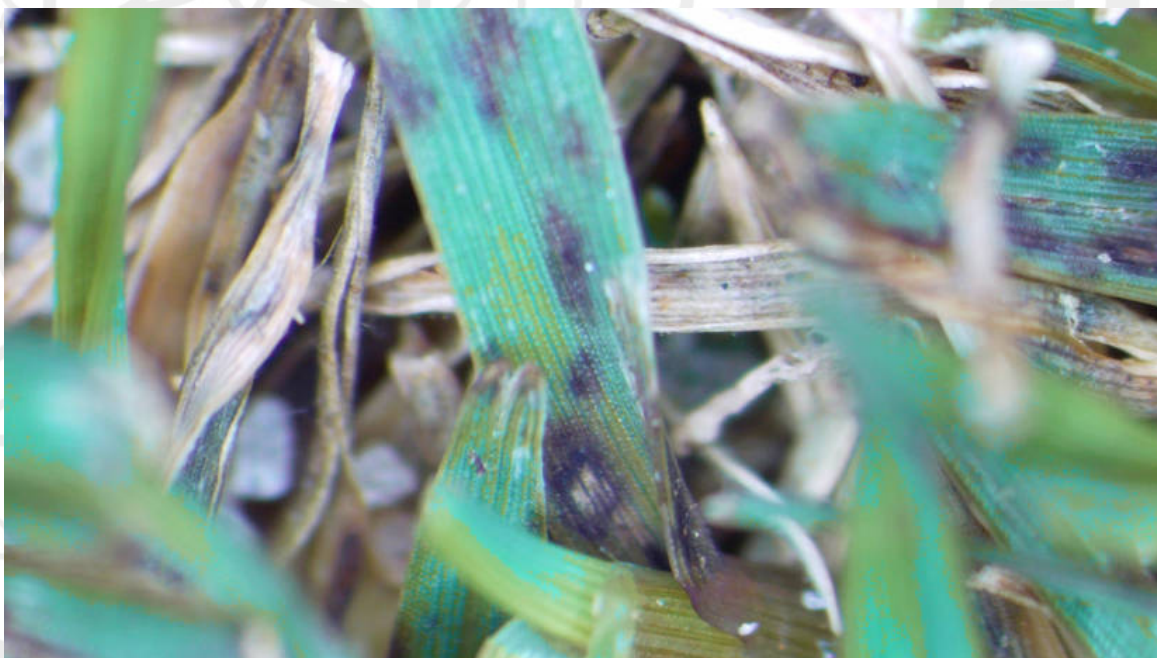




Why Should Golfers Be Concerned About Grasses Getting Sick?

There are at least three very good reasons why golfers should know a little about the superintendent's efforts to manage disease problems on turfgrass:

- 1.** Some of the fungal and bacterial organisms that attack turf can result in severe damage – sometimes resulting in complete loss of turf cover and producing bad lies, bumpy putting and significant disruption to your round as the staff implements reestablishment efforts. Of course the loss of turf also detracts from the appearance of the course and can even slow down play if golfers are frequently having to take relief from areas marked as ground under repair.
- 2.** Treating turfgrass disease outbreaks and repairing damaged areas is expensive. Golf course superintendents are extremely careful when they apply fungicides for two reasons. First, superintendents recognize their environmental responsibility to apply products only where and when they are absolutely needed. Second, disease-control products are so expensive that superintendents simply cannot afford to waste them through misuse. Treating large disease outbreaks can be a serious financial hit to any course, eventually that cost is passed on to the golfers via green fees or dues.





- 3.** How can you as a golfer help? Your willingness to tolerate the efforts of the maintenance staff to promote healthy turfgrass is extremely helpful. Consider how some maintenance practices that all golfers despise impact the occurrence and severity of turfgrass disease problems.
- a.** Tree trimming and sometimes complete tree removal is necessary to provide light to turfgrass. These practices also result in improved air movement across playing surfaces which helps keep the turf dry. Most disease organisms thrive in shaded, moist environments – sometimes to the point that even applying a fungicide cannot completely stop disease activity.
 - b.** Not even golf course superintendents like aeration. However, aeration improves drainage and creates a soil environment that promotes healthy roots which directly translates to stronger plants.
 - c.** Turf that is grown in an environment with plenty of light, air movement, good drainage and properly cultivated soil is far less likely to suffer disease problems. Should a disease outbreak occur, turf in favorable growing environments often can grow through certain disease problems without the need to apply a fungicide. If damage does occur, turf in a good growing environment grows faster and is quick to recover.