

## HONEY FUNGUS

Where the source of an outbreak can be identified and removed or isolated further deaths can be prevented. Where this is not possible the following measures will minimise losses.

1. Never ignore a dead plant. Try to determine the cause of death.
2. Once honey fungus has been confirmed dig up and remove from the garden all dead and nearly dead plants, together with as many of the roots as possible. Where plants have died in a hedge not only the dead shrubs should be removed but also those extending at least 1 m (3ft) either side of the apparently diseased area.
3. Where practicable remove tree stumps whether or not they are infected by honey fungus. This is particularly important in a garden where honey fungus has been or is present. If it is not possible to dig up or grub out an affected tree stump, it should be ground or chipped in situ by a stump chipper. Some tree surgeons and specialist firms offer this service.
4. When a tree which has not been killed by honey fungus is felled and the stump cannot be removed, treatment with a proprietary formulation of ammonium sulphamate will kill the stump tissues and thus hasten decay by saprophytic organisms, reducing the period of colonization by honey fungus. It should be noted that ammonium sulphamate is harmful to living plants and so must be used exactly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. NB. Ammonium sulphamate is NOT the fertilizer ammonium sulphate. (Available as ROOT OUT)
5. If the precise or probable source of infection can be pin-pointed (an old hedgerow or tree stump, for example) it is sometimes possible to greatly reduce the chances of or even prevent new infections by inserting in the ground a physical barrier to the spread of the disease. This should consist of a vertical sheet of a durable and impermeable material such as butyl rubber pond lining or heavy gauge polythene or PVC.  
As the great majority of the fungal growth exist in the upper 15cm (6 ins) or so of the soil (deeper in well aerated soils), the protective strip need extend downwards for no more than about 30cm (12ins) 45cm (18ins) in well aerated sands or gravels. It should protrude 2-3 cm (about 1 in) or so above soil level and, as time goes by should not be allowed to become buried with soil or plant growth or debris.  
The barrier can be sited either to surround the source of infection (a stump for instance) or inserted between the infection source and the area to be protected (where the source cannot be conveniently surrounded or is on the edge of a property - an old hedgerow or woodland, perhaps). It should be sited far enough from both the infection source and from the plants to be protected to ensure that large, woody roots do not extend beneath it.
6. The fungus is likely to die out through lack of suitable sources of food if the infected area is cleared of all woody debris. If this is not possible then the ground should be left fallow, or put down to grass for several years running. Every effort should be made to remove all stumps and roots.
7. If an infected tree, shrub or hedge is to be replaced, plants less susceptible to infection should be grown unless it is clear that all infected material has been removed
8. Good cultural conditions with special attention to drainage and nutrition will ensure that trees and shrubs are growing vigorously and therefore less likely to succumb to honey fungus.

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Trees and shrubs should be fed annually with a complete fertiliser applied according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the plant is growing in grass, small pieces of turf should be lifted at intervals around the circumference of the tree and the fertiliser should be placed in each hole, watered in and the turf firmed back. Trees and shrubs should be mulched and watered before the soil dries out completely.

9. Where honey fungus is or has been a problem destruction of all debris from trees and shrubs will reduce the food supplies of the fungus. In these circumstances avoid using logs for edging paths unless they have been pressure-impregnated with a wood preservative.

10. If toadstools appear in a garden where no plant deaths have occurred they can be left to die down naturally or can be picked or brushed off. Should there be a pathogenic species of Honey Fungus in the garden, however, it would be advisable to determine whether or not the toadstools are growing from woody debris in the soil large enough to act as a food source. If so, it should be dug out as recommended above but if this would mean considerable disturbance to a lawn it would probably be better to remove the toadstools and then treat the lawn as an infected area, as described in note 5 above.