



Orchid viruses are spread by hand, by cutting tools, by contaminated pots, etc. Used pots and tools can be decontaminated by dipping in 10% bleach solution. Cutting tools can also be dipped in alcohol and flamed. When propagating or re-potting, take care to de-contaminate your pots and tools. Put one cutting tool in the 10% bleach solution while using the other; when ready to handle a different plant, just switch cutting tools. Potting soil should be steamed before re-use.

Smokers can get Tobacco Mosaic Virus on their orchids. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after smoking and before handling orchid plants.



Color break on Vanda flower due to CyMV.

Virus testing of orchid plants can be done for a nominal fee at the **Plant Pathology Lab, University of Guam**. Orchids can be tested for CyMV and ORSV. Nurseries may choose to do their own testing. The Plant Pathology lab at UOG will gladly assist nurserymen with training and in obtaining commercial testing kits.

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Disclaimer

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Orchid Virus Diseases Plant Disease Series



CyMV on Phalaenopsis flower.

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Orchid Virus Diseases

Orchid Virus Diseases

Many orchid species are affected by some 25 different virus diseases. The 2 most important viruses affecting orchids are Odontoglossum Ringspot Virus (**ORSV**) and Cymbidium Mosaic Virus (**CyMV**) Once an orchid plant is infected by a virus, it cannot be cured. It should be destroyed immediately to avoid the virus spreading to other orchids.



Oncidium leaves with symptoms of ORSV.

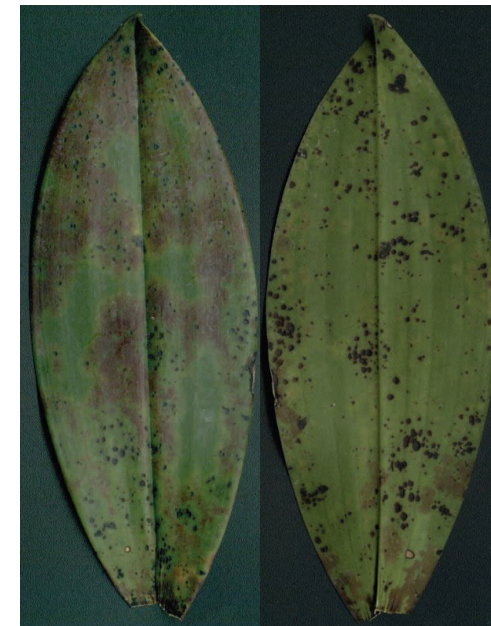
Orchid plants infected with viruses grow more slowly, may become stunted and take longer to produce flowers. The flowers may be discolored or deformed and smaller. Plants with virus infections may develop very unsightly symptoms. Infected plants are also susceptible to other diseases caused by bacteria and fungus. Virus diseases are contagious to other orchids and to certain other plants, although not to humans or animals.



Oncidium leaves with symptoms of ORSV.

Symptoms of virus infection can vary. Because orchids grow so slowly, they can be infected for some time without any visible symptoms. As soon as you see suspect symptoms on a plant, separate it from the other plants and have it tested. Infected plants should be destroyed at once. If you have infected orchids in your collection, you may need to test all your plants in order to eliminate all infected ones.

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Rhabdovirus symptoms on Dendrobium leaf; upper and lower surfaces, respectively. The above photo courtesy of Brisbane Orchid Society. <http://www.users.on.net/~gmcobin/BOS/virus.html>



Phalaenopsis leaf with symptoms of CyMV and ORSV.