

VIRUSES

What is an orchid virus?

Orchids are susceptible to a number of viruses, many of which are not fully understood. These viruses are spread when fluids from an infected plant come into contact with an injury on a healthy plant. This is why you should always sterilize your scissors when pruning orchids!

What should I do if my plant looks infected?

If your orchid is showing signs of CymMV or ORSV, isolate the plant away from any others to avoid contamination. Always wash and sterilize your tools after any pruning, and wear gloves when repotting.

You can buy test kits to check for CymMV and ORSV. If the result comes back as positive for either virus, it is advisable to dispose of the plant. There is no treatment for CymMV or ORSV, and an infected plant poses a risk to any other orchids in your collection.



Cymbidium Mosaic Virus



Cymbidium Mosaic Virus (CymMV) is one of the most common viruses that can infect orchids. It does not affect other plants but can spread quickly throughout a collection of orchids.

CymMV stunts the growth of orchids and reduces the number of flowers they produce. Other signs of CymMV include color break in the flowers and necrosis which typically appears as a cluster of dark spots on a leaf or flower.

Image: Justin Kondrat

Odontoglossum Ringspot Virus



Odontoglossum ringspot virus (ORSV) is another common orchid virus. Similar to CymMV, it causes reduced growth, flower death, and necrotic spotting.

Like CymMV, ORSV also presents as a series of necrotic spots, but ORSV spots are often larger or more prominent on the blossoms of an infected plant.

Image: Melina Castro