

IMPATIENS DOWNY MILDEW

With the recent reports of a sweeping disease epidemic affecting our favorite annual you might be worried about planting Impatiens this year.

Here are the facts. Impatiens downy mildew (IDM) is an aggressive foliar disease that attacks members of the common bedding plant Impatiens and Double Impatiens (*Impatiens walleriana*).

Early symptoms of impatiens downy mildew are difficult to detect and plants can be infected without showing any visible signs of the disease.

SYMPTOMS.

- A light-green yellowing or stippling of leaves, mimicking nutritional deficiency or spider mite damage.
- Plants appear stunted, leaves and flowers will drop as the disease progresses resulting in green, leafless stems.
- White, down-like growth on the undersides of leaves.

DOWNY MILDEW CAN DEVELOP IN THE HOME LANDSCAPE IN THREE WAYS.

- Occurred last year and overwintered on plant residue.
- Brought in on infected plants (even if they showed no signs of disease).
- Blown in by wind or rain from a neighbor's yard.

There is no cure for Impatiens downy mildew. Infected plants should be pulled and discarded immediately.

DO NOT COMPOST THE INFECTED PLANTS!! Disease spores can survive in composted materials to infect new plants.



SHADE SURVIVORS

But don't worry- many shade lovers are resistant to Impatiens downy mildew. Try these alternatives to the standard garden Impatiens:

- Begonias (all varieties)
- Browalia
- Caladiums
- Coleus (all varieties)
- Creeping Jenny
- 'Diamond Frost' Euphorbia
- Dichondra
- Fanfare Impatiens
- Hypoestes (Polka Dot Plant)
- New Guinea Impatiens
- Oxalis
- Purple Heart
- Streptocarpella
- Sunpatiens
- Sweet Potato Vine
- Torenia
- Wandering Jew
- Wire Vine (Angel Vine)

