

Our Recommendations for Impatiens

1. Plant only in containers or hanging baskets.
2. Only plant in new, high quality potting soil.
3. Water in early morning, directing the water to the root zone keeping the leaves dry if possible.
4. Mix it up! Plant with other plants, avoid straight species plantings.

**recommendations will not guarantee that
you will win the "Impatiens lottery"*



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Downy Mildew

Is it time to give
Impatiens another try?



Indeed there is good news out there

Confirmed reports of the pesky Downy Mildew disease are way down. But when there are fewer Impatiens planted, the chance of infection is drastically reduced. 21 states confirmed having the disease in 2014, the fact is, the disease is out there. We've been hoping that a breeder might come up with a resistant variety, but until then, we are forced to play the "Impatiens lottery". For those of you that are feeling lucky and cherish taking risks, we have decided to bring back Impatiens in limited quantities and sizes. Most Impatiens will only be sold in jumbo 6-packs and hanging baskets. We will not be selling them for bedding use. We recommend only planting them in containers that have fresh, high quality potting soil. Of course, the most conservative approach is to plant shade-tolerant annuals that are resistant to Downy Mildew. They include New Guinea Impatiens, Begonia, Caladium & Coleus. Sun tolerant annuals that make great alternatives include Vinca Rosea, Marigolds, Salvia and Petunias.



Quick Facts:

What Is Impatiens Downy Mildew?

Downy Mildew is fungal blight very similar in appearance to Powdery Mildew, a common fungus on garden phlox and lilac bushes. Powdery Mildew is treatable but unfortunately with Downy Mildew there is no cure and the plant will eventually weaken and die.

What are the symptoms of Impatiens Downy Mildew?

Impatiens exhibiting symptoms of downy mildew may appear different from landscape to landscape depending on how advanced the disease is. Early symptoms include leaves with light-green yellowing or stippling. The leaves may also curl downward; have gray markings on the upper surface or white fungal growth on the undersides. Advanced symptoms include stunted plant and leaf growth, bare plants as the result of leaf and flower drop and softened, weak stems.

How does the disease spread?

Downy mildew is spread by spores on the undersides of infected plant leaves. Because the spores easily detach from the plant they can be spread by wind or water splash. In the landscape, spores can travel hundreds of miles via wind currents, and plants not yet showing symptoms may unintentionally infect those around them. It spreads most easily in moist conditions. The disease is also capable of surviving the winter in the soil and on plant debris. Therefore, reinfestation is almost certain.

What plants are susceptible to this disease?

Downy mildew affects all types of standard impatiens (*Impatiens walleriana*), including doubles, minis and interspecific hybrids such as Fusion. It is not a problem on New Guinea Impatiens (*I. hawkeri*) or any of the other popular annual choices.

Is there anything I can do to prevent my plants from getting Impatiens Downy Mildew?

There is no product on the market today that will cure this disease. There is however preventive fungicides that will help control Downy Mildew but only when on an aggressive schedule. Environmentally, this is not a realistic approach since most chemicals need to be applied every 7 days by a certified applicator.

What can I plant in my yard instead of Impatiens?

There are many shade-tolerant annuals that are resistant to Downy Mildew, including New Guinea Impatiens, Begonia, Caladium and Coleus. Sun tolerant annuals that make great alternatives include Vinca Rosea, Marigolds, Salvia and Petunias.