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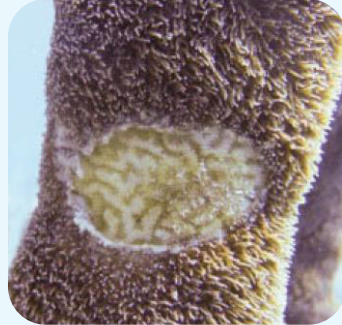


MPAConnect guide to detect Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease on Caribbean coral reefs

Total
loss of
affected
tissue



Bare skeleton
with no tissue



Sloughing away
of tissue

Be Alert!

A new coral disease is causing high mortality of stony corals

Cause is unknown but it is water-borne and may spread via direct contact

Take care not to confuse with other coral diseases, bleaching or fish bites

Correct field diagnosis depends on multiple factors

Highly
susceptible
species



Eusmilia fastigiata



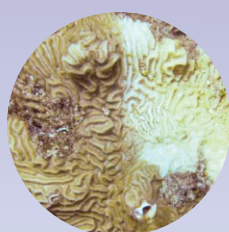
Dendrogyra cylindrus



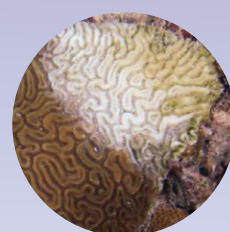
Dichocoenia stokesii



Meandrina meandrites



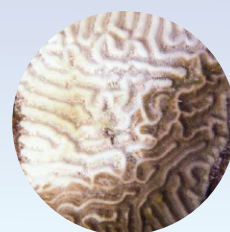
Pseudodiploria clivosa



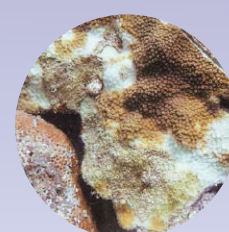
Diploria labyrinthiformis



Colpophyllia natans



Pseudodiploria strigosa



Orbicella species



Montastrea cavernosa



Siderastrea siderea

Typical order of infection

Rapid
spread

Within one week
to two months

High prevalence
and mortality

Among susceptible species

~2-3%
Normal
background
disease
prevalence

66-100%
Species-specific
Stony Coral Tissue Loss
Disease prevalence

On coral colonies
Multiple lesions

On dive sites
Rapid spread among corals

Rapid mortality

What can managers do?

- 1 Monitor highly susceptible species via roving diver surveys
- 2 Monitor sentinel sites weekly – old, large, healthy, spawning colonies
- 3 Monitor suspected cases every three days to weekly, take photos, note date and location
- 4 Inform your agency about new threat, seek contingency support, investigate supplies for treatment
- 5 Inform relevant stakeholders, encourage reporting
- 6 Prevent spread – wash dive gear in lots of fresh water and sun dry, disinfect survey tools, dive on clean sites before infected sites
- 7 Promote ballast water management, exchange ballast offshore and not on coral reefs
- 8 Seek training in protocols for treatment of priority corals

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Coral photography:
K. Neely, Nova Southeastern University.
Graphic Design: ©2019 Deviate Design

Contact MPAConnect for advice and training mpaconnect@gcfi.org
For more information, see <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/coral-disease/>
and <https://www.gcfi.org/emerging-issues-florida-coral-disease-outbreak/>

