

Snow Mold

Snow mold is a fungal disease that appears in the early spring as the snow melts. There are two types of snow mold. Grey snow mold and pink snow mold. Pink snow mold infects the crown of the plant and can cause more severe injury than gray snow mold, which only infects the leaf tissue. Snow mold damage looks like circular patches (3"-12") of dead and matted grass. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, the circles can coalesce and become a large mass. It is not in common to find both gray and pink snow mold together.

Pink snow mold is distinguished by the pink color of the web-like mycelium growing on the grass surface. While the grass is wet, the mycelium starts out white and resembles cobwebs, as it matures it turns its pink or salmon color. The mycelium quickly disappears as the grass dries.

Gray snow mold is similar to pink snow mold except that its mycelium remains whitish-gray. The presence of tiny black mycelium masses on the grass blades and leaf sheaths of infected plants which pink snow mold does not produce also distinguish gray snow mold.

What To Do

Snow mold is caused when there is an extended period of snow cover on the ground that is not completely frozen. Snow mold can also occur under leaves that have not been cleaned up or amongst long grass that should have been mowed once more before winter set in.

To minimize the risk of snow mold occurring on the lawn it is important to put the lawn to bed properly. By mowing the lawn until it stops growing, clean up leaves in the fall, manage thatch to avoid accumulations of more than 2".

Comments