

Dear Homeowner,



We at Jim Melka Landscaping & Garden Center are busy finalizing greenhouse orders and are beginning to grow colorful annuals for the upcoming season. Each year we review new and old varieties in the industry in order to provide the highest quality and most durable flowers to our customers. With this in mind, one of the most popular flowering annual for a shaded condition, impatiens (*Impatiens walleriana*), are being affected by a devastating fungal disease called **Downy Mildew** (*Plasmopara obducens*).

Early visual symptoms of Downy Mildew resemble a nutrient deficiency or spider mite damage with yellow, chlorotic leaves. Infected plants will have a white powder on the undersides of their leaves. This disease spreads rapidly and will eventually kill an entire planting bed of gorgeous annuals.



1. Early Infection by Downy Mildew



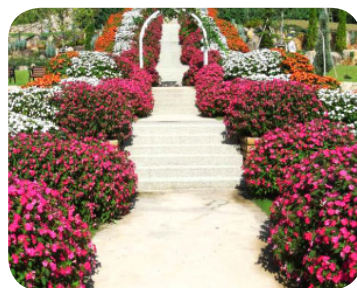
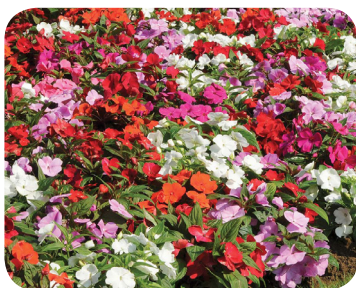
2. Underside of infected leaf



3. Advanced Infection by Downy Mildew

Because the early and mid part of 2012 were overly hot and dry; the disease did not develop fully until August. Therefore, our area was very fortunate to not have wide spread devastation from Downy Mildew. Unfortunately, once plants are infected there is no cure. Currently, there are fungicides on the market that can slow the progression of the disease, however it is only a temporary solution. If plants are infected, the most important step is to completely remove and dispose of the entire plant. Be diligent in removing all the leaves, flower petals, and roots of the diseased plants.

After consulting with a wide range of professional growers and University Extension Officials, the best recommendation is to consider selecting alternative annual varieties for your planting beds. To date, there are forms of impatiens not affected by Downy Mildew. For example, both New Guinea Impatiens and Sunpatiens are available in a variety of colors and growth habits.



Below are additional colorful varieties of shade and sun tolerant annuals to consider for your spring planting beds.



Please contact us with any questions or concerns regarding this issue, and more importantly to discuss possible choices for your spring annual planting beds. We can be reached anytime via email at **services@jimmelka.com** or through our Mobile App. Have a very HAPPY SPRING!

Sincerely,

The Staff at Jim Melka Garden Center

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