

Powdery Mildew

The Fungus

Powdery mildew is a common fungal disease in Minnesota. It does not cause significant damage to trees and shrubs and therefore does not require immediate treatment. However, it does affect the aesthetics of ornamental plants.



Powdery mildew fungi present on dogwood leaves (1).

Signs & Symptoms

- White to gray powdery spots on leaves.
- Large felt-like mats appear on leaves, buds and twigs of the infected plant.
- May look like baby powder or cobwebs.
- New growth is affected most.
- Leaves may curl with infection.

Disease Transmission

During the winter, tiny structures that contain small round spores form on the plant. As spring approaches, the structures break open and spores are spread in the wind to other plants¹. High humidity is also a cause for spread of new infection.

Implications for Minnesota

There are no serious implications for this fungal disease. Powdery mildew does not have a significant impact on plant health¹.

Management & Control Considerations

- To prevent spread in Minnesota do not overcrowd ornamental plants in the yard.
- There are now several developed disease resistant strains of ornamental shrubs that can be planted.
- Do not fertilize infected plants. This will cause young shoots to grow, and they are more susceptible to this disease¹.

Sources

1) <https://extension.umn.edu/plant-diseases/powdery-mildew-trees-and-shrubs>