

Preventing Exposure

Minimizing aquarium handlers' exposure is ideal but not always realistic. Protective measures can be taken to protect yourself when interacting with fish tanks.

When conducting a water change or tank cleaning, **elbow-length waterproof gloves** should be worn to protect any open skin.

Any **equipment** involved in fish tank maintenance should be **disinfected with a diluted bleach** solution.

Once the tank has been cleaned, owners should promptly **wash their hands**.

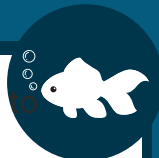


How to Protect Your Community



Animal shelters that house fish should wear proper PPE when interacting with fish and fish tanks. Adoption representatives should also relay safety measures and information about Fish Tank Granuloma to adopters to further support public health efforts.

Pet owners relinquishing fish to their local shelter should be honest and share any previous cases or symptoms their fish may be experiencing with intake personnel. Fish owners should always use the recommended prevention measures outlined in this document.



Fish Tank Granuloma

Stay Informed, Stay Safe — Learn About Fish Tank Granuloma to Protect Yourself and Your Community!

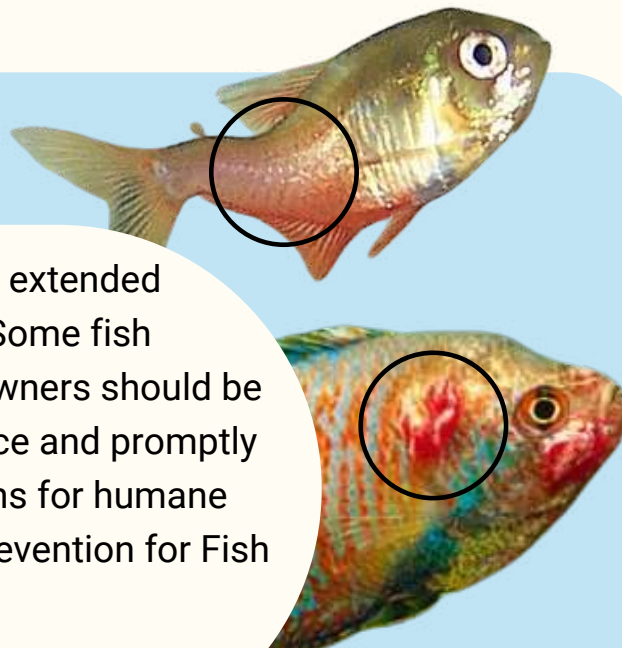


What is Fish Tank Granuloma?

Fish Tank Granuloma is a skin infection caused by *Mycobacterium marinum*. This bacteria is commonly found in fish tanks and can infect owners via open wounds after handling aquarium fish, tank decorations, and tank equipment. Most often, **infection occurs** when aquarium owners are **cleaning out their fish tanks** or **conducting a water change**.

Symptoms in Fish

Fish can experience symptoms such as an extended abdomen, bulging eyes, and **skin lesions**. Some fish experience **spinal deformities**. Fish tank owners should be vigilant in monitoring their fish's appearance and promptly remove fish that display possible symptoms for humane euthanasia. There is no current medical prevention for Fish Tank Granuloma at this time.

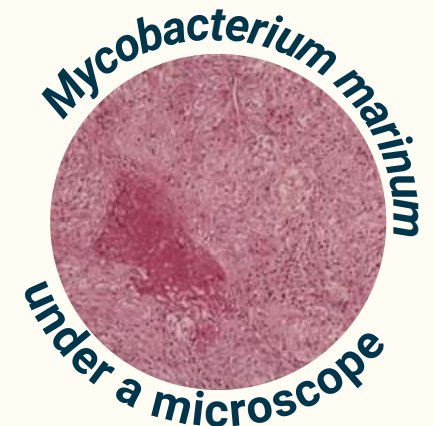


Symptoms in Humans

Human symptoms vary greatly, as some patients are asymptomatic. However, many patients report an **inflamed lesion** on their skin where a previous cut was present. Some lesions cause discomfort, such as an **itching and burning** sensation.

The infection may appear as eczema or even as several ulcers. Some patients report their lesions resolving without medical intervention within months, while others require medication.

In immunocompromised individuals, the infection may spread to the rest of the body, requiring additional medical attention. Fish Tank Granuloma is uncommon, so owners must discuss their exposure upon presentation. Long courses of antibiotics often resolve lesions without complications.



Fish Tank Maintenance and YOU

Protect yourself from zoonotic diseases like Fish Tank Granuloma—a bacteria in aquariums that can infect open cuts during tank cleaning or water changes, causing itchy, painful lesions. Take the following steps to prevent infection!



PROTECT OPEN CUTS

Wear elbow-length waterproof gloves during water changes or tank cleanings. This provides a barrier between skin and water.



DISINFECT EQUIPMENT

Any equipment involved in fish tank maintenance should be disinfected with a dilute bleach solution.



WASH HANDS

Once the tank has been cleaned, promptly wash your hands with soap and warm water.