

Parasites in Fish

Anglers sometimes report harvesting fish that contain worms, grubs, cysts, or lumps in the flesh, worms in and around the intestines, or a fungus growth on the skin, fins, or gills. Fish parasites are a normal part of the aquatic environment. Common fish parasites include tapeworms, black spot, and yellow grubs. While unpleasant to look at, the edible parts of the fish that contain parasites can be eaten provided they are fully cooked. Parasites are only a problem when fish are eaten that are not thoroughly cooked.

- Do not eat dying or dead fish.
- Thoroughly cook fish to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F.



Red Sores, Lesions, and External Growths

These abnormalities are generally a result of viral or bacterial infections. The appearance of viral or bacterial infections in fish may be unsightly, but there is no evidence to suggest that these infections pose a threat to consumers. Whether or not to eat these fish is a matter of personal choice. Damaged or infected tissue should be removed. Do not eat dying or dead fish.

Sources of Information

University of Georgia College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences Cooperative Extension Service, *Angler's Guide to Fish Diseases and Parasites*
http://www.wildlifemanagement.info/publications/fish_ponds_2.pdf

University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC_Fish_Health

