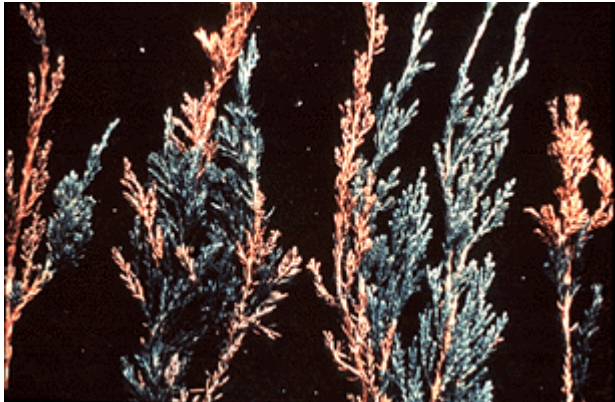


Problem: Phomopsis Tip Blight of Juniper - *Phomopsis juniperovora*



Plant Hosts: Upright and Spreader juniper species.

Description: The fungal disease called Phomopsis tip blight is a common problem in windbreak and ornamental plantings of junipers. This disease results in foliar blighting and a tip dieback. Damage to young nursery stock, transplants and certain juniper varieties and species can be extensive, but most established junipers in the landscape are seldom killed. Nevertheless, this tip blight may reduce the overall quality of the planting.

Phomopsis tip blight, caused by the fungus *Phomopsis juniperovora*, damages new growth and succulent branch tips of junipers from mid-April through September. Older, mature foliage is resistant to infection, and therefore most blighting occurs on the terminal 4 to 6 inches of the branches. Affected foliage first turns dull red or brown and finally ash-gray. Small gray lesions often girdle branch tips and causes blighting of foliage beyond the diseased tissue. Small, black, spore-containing fungal fruit bodies develop in the lesions. Use a hand lens to more easily view these diagnostic fungal structures.

Spores of the *Phomopsis* fungus are produced throughout the summer, and infection can occur whenever young foliage is available and moisture or humidity is high. Most infections usually occur in April through early June and again in late August through September. Very few infections occur in midsummer or during the winter months. Repeated blighting in early summer can result in abnormal bunching (witch's broom) and discoloration of the foliage, stunting of young trees or shrubs, or in severe cases plant death.

Recommendations: Several practices can help reduce the severity of Phomopsis tip blight. When purchasing new plants, select those that show disease resistance. Space new plantings to allow for good air circulation. Avoid wounding plants, especially in

spring and fall. Maintain adequate fertility but do not over fertilize. Water plants in early morning so the foliage will dry as the day progresses. Avoid night watering. Prune out diseased branch tips during dry summer weather and destroy them. However, avoid excessive pruning or shearing. This encourages new succulent growth which is susceptible to Phomopsis blight.

Chemical control of these tip blight diseases normally is not necessary in established landscape or windbreak plantings.

References:

1. [Tree & Shrub Problems in Kansas](#). K-State Research and Extension, Publication MF3132

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