



Stocking up for Fish Emergencies

By Jan Schreier

I spent a little time speaking with members of the Upper Midwest Koi Club (www.umkoiclub.org) about what are some of the essential things one would need to have “on hand” in case of an emergency with your fish. Here is a summary of what they said:

A Microscope. It is important to be able to identify parasites or to make sure that there aren't parasites as a diagnostic tool. You can't treat it if you don't know what it is.

Quarantine Tank. You must be able to quarantine new fish (Ron Sterbenz says 8 weeks minimum) before you introduce them to your entire fish population. For really expensive or rare fish collections, Sue Emerick recommends putting in a “canary” fish with your new fish in the quarantine tank. This is a fish that you don't mind losing (like a canary in a mine). Oftentimes, a fish can be a carrier of a disease like Koi Herpes Virus (KHV) without showing early symptoms. Sometimes, a healthy fish will show symptoms before the carrier fish. Also, a quarantine tank can help isolate a sick fish or allow you to treat an injured fish without having to treat your entire pond. The size of the tank should be proportional to the size and population of your fish. The quarantine tank should also have good aeration and filtration available. You can have your quarantine tank and filter running all year by housing a few small fish in it permanently, or you can kick start it by pumping water from your pond into it in an emergency. The only problem with this second option is if you are having a problem with your pond water causing your fish to die. Then, the quarantine tank will do you no good if you have to start with fresh tap water and wait for it to stabilize.

Medicine Cabinet. The following medications are good to have on hand in case of an emergency:

Dimilin. Treats anchor worm & lice

Tricide Neo. A good general antibiotic

Proform-C or **Prazi.** These treat most microscopic parasites

Learn how to make and apply a non-iodized **salt paste**

Know Your Veterinarian. If you have other pets, have a discussion with your veterinarian, and let them know you have a pond with fish. Invite them out to see your pond, or discuss fish health & nutrition. This way, if you ever need them to prescribe an injectible antibiotic, they will be more likely to do so for you in the event of an emergency.

References. The following reference materials were recommended:

Book: **Koikichi** by Waddington

Book: **Koi Health** by Erik (Doc) Johnson

Internet:

Upper Midwest Koi Club www.umkoiclub.org

www.koiphen.com

www.koishack.com

www.koi-bito.com