

# Necrotising Hepatopancreatitis (NHP)

Disease agent: *Candidatus Hepatobacter penaei*, a gram negative species of alpha-proteobacteria.



Presence in Australia: **Exotic**

Presence in Queensland: **Exotic**



Necrotising Hepatopancreatitis caused by *Hepatobacter penaei* is exotic to Australia and has not been recorded in any State.

## Signs of Disease:

Crustaceans infected with this bacteria may exhibit the following signs:



- a pale/white shrunken hepatopancreas with or without black (melanised) streaks
- lethargy
- soft shell with heavy external fouling
- black (melanised) gills
- empty gut

### Necrotising Hepatopancreatitis (NHP):

Top. A Pacific white shrimp from the USA with NHP; note darkening at base of swimmerets, giving a fouled, 'dirty' appearance.

Below. The same shrimp showing a marked reduction in the size of the hepatopancreas.

Photos: Don Lightner

**Host Species affected may include:**

Prawns (all)

**Imported seafood including:**

Uncooked prawns (all)

**At risk fisheries in QLD may include:**

East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery  
River and Inshore Beam Trawl Fishery

**Introduction Pathways to avoid:**

Do not use imported seafood (particularly imported uncooked prawns) for bait or berley.

**Basic decontamination information:**

This disease agent can be inactivated by the following treatments: Dessication (drying out). There is little information available specific for this pathogen relating to its tolerance to high temperatures, but related species of bacteria are inactivated by exposure to 60°C for over 5 minutes, or 3.5% formalin for 20 minutes.

**What to do if this disease is suspected:**

If you suspect this disease is present please contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (13 25 23) or the National 24 hr Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888) immediately.

**How to collect and store samples for diagnosis:**

If you are taking samples to help authorities to test for this disease, whole crustaceans should be provided alive (if possible) or chilled and on ice (but not frozen).

**Learn more**

For more information about NHP and other diseases of aquatic animals of significance to Australia, download the **Aquatic Disease Field Guide App** available for iOS, android and windows devices at these locations:

**IOS**

<https://goo.gl/9UJNp9>

**ANDROID**

<https://goo.gl/T4Tn1X>

**WINDOWS**

<https://goo.gl/Y8Vibi>

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