

# Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (VHS)

**Disease agent: Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia Virus, a rhabdovirus of the genus *Novirhabdovirus*.**



**Presence in Australia: Exotic**

**Presence in Queensland: Exotic**



Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia is exotic to Australia and has not been recorded in any State.

## Signs of Disease:

Fish infected with this disease may exhibit the following signs:

- affected fish are lethargic and not feeding well
- uncoordinated swimming
- swollen abdomen due to fluid accumulation (ascites)
- pinpoint haemorrhages (bleeding) under the eyes and throughout the fillet
- pale gills, popeye (exophthalmos)



### **Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia:**

VHS in a gizzard shad from the Great Lakes, USA. This fish has a multiple haemorrhagic lesions on the body surface, as well as pinpoint haemorrhages throughout the fillet, and internal organs. Photo: M. Faisal

**Host Species affected may include:**

Bream	Eels (all)
Flatfish (all)	Hairtail
Sea mullet	Snapper
Stout whiting	

**Imported seafood fishes including:**

Atlantic cod	Pacific cod
Atlantic herring	European eel
Channel catfish	Haddock
Hake	Herring
Pacific sardine	Whitefish
Trout	Salmon

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

Queensland Eel Fishery  
Rocky Reef Finfish Fishery  
East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery  
Finfish (Stout Whiting) Trawl Fishery

**Introduction Pathways to avoid:**

Do not use imported seafood or ornamental fish for bait or berley, and do not release ornamental fish into waterways.

**Basic decontamination information:**

This disease agent can be inactivated by the following treatments: Temperatures above 50°C for over 10 minutes, 50 mg/L chlorine for 1 minute, 50 mg/L iodine for 1 minute, 125 mg/L benzalkonium chloride for 5 minutes, 0.1% Virkon S for 15 minutes, 40% ethanol for 2 minutes or UV light >10 mJ/cm<sup>2</sup>.

**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 fish should be provided alive (if possible) or chilled and on ice (but not frozen).

**Learn more**

For more information about VHS 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/Y8Vibj>

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