

Vocabulary: Coral Reefs 2 – Biotic Factors



Vocabulary

- **Biotic factor** – the living components that affect an ecosystem.
 - Examples of biotic factors include disease-causing bacteria, *invasive species*, and humans.
 - *Abiotic factors* are the nonliving components of an ecosystem. Examples include temperature, salinity, and pH.
- **Black band disease** – a disease characterized by a narrow band of microorganisms that gradually spreads across a coral, completely destroying coral tissue as it moves.
 - Black band disease mainly affects massive corals such as star corals and brain corals.
 - Corals that are stressed by high water temperatures or other factors are more likely to become infected with black band disease.
- **Invasive species** – an introduced species that is harmful to native species.
 - Introduced species are organisms that do not naturally occur in a given region.
 - Not all introduced species are invasive species. Only species that have harmful effects are considered invasive.
- **White band disease** – a coral disease that generally proceeds from the base of the colony up toward the branch tips, destroying coral tissue as it goes.
 - White band disease affects two branched coral species in the Caribbean: staghorn coral and elkhorn coral.
 - The cause of white band disease has not been identified yet.

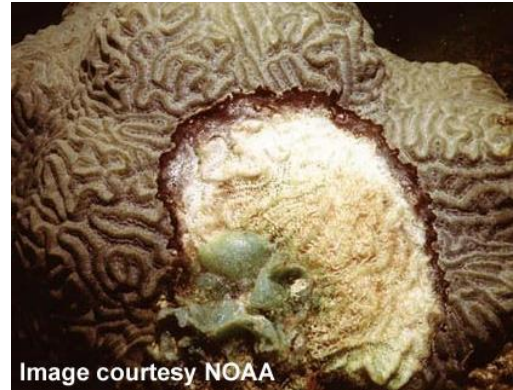


Image courtesy NOAA

Black band disease on brain coral



White band disease on elkhorn coral