

Pine pitch canker (*Fusarium circinatum*)

Pine pitch canker is a fungus which causes reduced growth, cankers, low timber quality, and sometimes extensive tree mortality.

It occurs in pine and Douglas fir.

The fungus reduces seed germination, and infected seedlings show damping off symptoms which include dying tissue, yellowing needles, wilting, parts of the plant dying back, and drying out at the tip of the seedling.

Root infections occur on seedlings and on exposed roots of larger trees. In the crown, infected needles turn yellow and eventually red, before dropping. Stem girdling causes shoot dieback.

Mature trees develop sticky resin- (pitch) soaked cankers on trunks and big branches. These damaged areas can spread, causing the trunk to become deformed and, in some cases, even break.

If you suspect it, report it by visiting <https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/> or use the QR code.



Branch tip death caused by cankers girdling the branch.
Credit: Joan Webber, Forest Research



Fusarium circinatum (GIBBCI) - <https://gd.eppo.int>
Pinus radiata resin (pitch) bleeds, usually associated with cankers on branches, Credit: Miloň Dvořák, EPPO



Effects of pitch canker infection on pine timber. Credit: Kath Tubby, Forest Research