

# 5 TRICKS TO HEALTHY FISH

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## WATER QUALITY

The #1 thing you can do to keep your fish healthy is to have good, clean water. Think about how the air you breathe can affect your own health. It's the same for fish, just underwater. You should test pH, ammonia, nitrite, nitrate, alkalinity and temperature regularly. Buy a reliable test kit that uses liquid drops, not strips, for the best results.

2

## QUARANTINE

Any new fish you bring into your pond has the potential to bring along all of its diseases. In order to protect your established fish, all new additions should be separately quarantined for 4-6 weeks minimum. This will prevent disease spread to your other fish and allow you to treat the new fish specifically. Quarantining will save you time, money and lives. Potentially the lives of all your fish.

3

## NUTRITION

Pick a food for your koi from a reputable company with a good reputation who know their products well. The two main differences in koi foods are growth and maintenance. The temperature of the water in your pond will determine what type of food to feed when. Below 50°-55°F, do not feed your koi. Their metabolism is not high enough to digest anything. Between 55°F and 65°F, feed them a more easily digestible, wheat-germ based diet. Above 65°F, it is okay to feed a higher-protein, growth diet. There are also specialized diets to enhance the color of your koi. We recommend feeding koi using the 5 Minute Technique. After checking the pond temperature and choosing the appropriate diet, sprinkle a small amount of food and wait for your fish to eat it ALL. Then, sprinkle another small handful and wait for them to eat it all. Continue this for 5 minutes, then stop.

4

## RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF DISEASE

Since you see your fish every day, you will be the first to notice anything amiss. Maybe one fish doesn't have the appetite she used to or another who used to be a bully is hanging back at the bottom during feeding time. Sometimes, it's not the obvious wounds that we get called out for. Signs of disease can include inappetance, anorexia, lethargy, change in color or behavior. Fish have different personalities that may change upon the addition of new fish to the pond. Stress can cause a lot of problems in koi. Most stress in koi comes from poor water quality!

5

## DON'T GUESS! ASK A FISH VET

Not all fish owners have direct access to a veterinarian specializing in fish, but you do! Dr. Jessie Sanders, chief veterinarian of Aquatic Veterinary Services of Northern California, is a certified aquatic veterinarian through the World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association. Her mobile clinic brings the full veterinary clinic right to you! Our hospital offers in-house appointments, critical care and boarding. Any questions you have about any aspect of koi care can be answered promptly and correctly. The next time your fish gets sick, don't just throw a bunch of treatments at it hoping to correct the unknown problem. Call us and we can schedule a phone consultation or appointment to get to the root of the problem quickly and treat correctly the first time.



## WATER PARAMETERS

**Ammonia:** 0.1 mg/L or less

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**Nitrite:** 0 mg/L

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**Nitrate:** varies with pond

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**pH:** 6.5-9.0 (stable level most  
important)

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**Alkalinity:** >100 mg/L

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**Hardness:** >100 mg/L

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**Temp:** pond dependent and seasonal

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