

Mealybugs: White Residue On Plant's Leaves

By Heather Rhoades

Houseplants can be found in many homes and many houseplants are pretty, yet easy to care for plants. Unfortunately, due to the enclosed environment that a houseplant is normally found in, houseplants are susceptible to pests. One of those pests is mealybugs.

Does My Houseplant Have Mealybugs?

Mealybugs will commonly leave a white residue on a plant's leaves that resembles cotton. You will find this residue mostly on the stems and leaves. This residue is either the egg sacs of the mealybugs or the pests themselves.

You may also find that the plant has a sticky residue on it. This is [honeydew](#) ^[1] and is secreted by the mealybugs. It can also attract ants.

Mealybugs look like small, flat oval white spots on plant leaves. They are also fuzzy or powdery looking.

How Do Mealybugs Hurt My Houseplant?

Besides the unsightly white residue and spots on plants' leaves, mealybugs will literally suck the life out of your houseplant. When they reach maturity, a mealybug will insert a sucking mouth into the flesh of your houseplant. One mealybug will not hurt your plant, but they multiply quickly and if a plant is badly affected, the mealybugs may overwhelm the plant.

Mealybug Home Pest Control

If you have found the white residue on plant's leaves that indicates a mealybug infestation, immediately isolate the plant. One mealybug home pest control is to scrape away any white residue and spots on plants leaves that you can find. Then,

using a solution of one part alcohol to three parts water with some dish soap (without bleach) mixed in, wash down the entire plant. Let the plant sit for a few days and repeat the process.

Another mealybug home pest control is to apply [neem oil](#) ^[2] or a pesticide to the plant. You will most likely need several treatments.

Mealybugs are damaging and difficult to eliminate, but it can be done with prompt attention to the signs of a mealybug infestation.

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