

QUARANTINE (If you have your own quarantine protocol, this is not intended for you!)

With this recommendation, we are NOT implying that anyone's pond or the Koi they have brought for re-homing are unhealthy. All fish have "bugs" – parasites, bacteria, and other critters that live in water and each pond or body of water has its own bugs. When a fish is healthy and accustomed to its environment, it can live "with" these bugs, and not get sick from them.

But stress can cause a fish to be less healthy, and then not able to tolerate the effects of the bugs in their home. Handling and moving fish causes them stress. Changing their environment from one pond to another can cause them stress. When they are stressed, they are less able to cope with the normal bugs in their water

When a fish is moved into a new environment, it will run into bugs it is not familiar with and may not be able to adjust quickly enough to resist them. It can bring bugs with them that your established fish are not used to, and new bugs always have the potential for causing illness, even in healthy fish.

Once a fish has gotten sick, and the bugs have taken over its body, the process can spread to your entire pond, resulting in a pond full of sick fish.

It is difficult to treat a large body of water effectively. Keeping new fish in a smaller, more accessible tank, makes treating them much easier and less expensive.

One very effective way to prevent a new fish from getting sick is to quarantine it before introducing it to your established pond. Keeping them separate for a period of time allows them to settle down, reestablish their normal health, and get used to the new bugs they will now live with.

So, if at all possible, please quarantine your new fish. This means keeping them in a large tank with its own filtration and air supply. The water should be fresh, from your water supply, not from your pond, and treated to remove chlorine as you normally do. The tank should be covered, as fish like to try and "go home" when moved and may jump out of the tank. Be careful of where the tank is situated – full sun all day can increase the water temperature dangerously, and predators may find an outdoor tank an invitation for a quick meal. Feed them lightly during this time, to prevent the buildup of ammonia. Check water parameters daily, if possible, and do water changes to keep the environment at its best. Observe the new fish, watching for unusual behavior such as clamped fins, bottom sitting, or flashing (rubbing themselves as if to relieve an itch). If problems do occur, and you are not sure what the cause is, call someone in the club to help you figure it out.

Contacts are listed on the web site: <http://www.socokoi.org>.

How big should the tank be? The biggest one you can find room for. A few small fish, 6" to about 8", can make do with about 50 gallons. If you have much larger fish, you will need a much larger tank. The more water you have, the less contamination from ammonia.

How long should you quarantine? At least one month. Most bugs will have a chance to multiply and cause problems in that length of time. If something happens that requires treatment, once the treatment is done, start over on the month countdown.

There are literally thousands of articles on line regarding quarantine of new fish, and especially Koi. If you do a Google search for “quarantine procedure for new Koi” you will have plenty to read and think about. You will need to develop your own procedure, and club members will be glad to help.

As you read, you will frequently see reference to KHV, Koi Herpes Virus. This is a highly contagious and deadly virus, and there is no known cure. We have not, as far as we know, had an outbreak of this virus in Southern Colorado. That does not mean it is not present. Special quarantine procedures are needed to protect your established pond from this virus, so please be aware and research the possibilities.

Enjoy!