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## DISEASES

Clematis are very susceptible to a disease called Clematis Wilt. The first signs usually occur when the vines are in full leaf or even full flower. Suddenly, the leaves appear wilted and will remain that way even after thorough watering. The leaves will eventually turn brown and then black, as well as the stems. The entire plant will die back to the ground. At this point the vine should be pruned back to the ground. New shoots will emerge from below the soil surface, and the vine will begin growing again in several weeks. Wilt is a bacteria that enters the stem when a break occurs due to some kind of mechanical damage, such as strong winds or animal damage. A preventative spray containing sulfur can be applied.

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## Types of Clematis

Pink	Hagley Hybrid—shell pink—Group 2
White	Henryi—large white—Group 3 Ternifolia—fall blooming white—Group 1
Purple	Etoile Violette—deep purple—Group 2 Jackmanii—dark bluish purple—Group 2
Red	Ernest Markham—magenta red—Group 2 Mme. Julia Correvon—rose red—Group 2 Red Cardinal—deep velvety crimson—Group 2
Blue	Blue Light—double—Group 3 Elsa Spaeth—lavender blue—Group 3 Will Goodwin—powder blue—Group 3
Two-Tone	Nelly Moser—pale pink/reddish-pink stripe—Group 3

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# CLEMATIS:

## Care, Feeding & Growth

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Clematis are beautiful vines which produce masses of small or large flowers for a showy display in the landscape. They can be trained to grow on a trellis, fence, or over an arbor. The foliage of the clematis is attractive and seed heads are retained to extend the period of interest into the winter months.

With these helpful tips, we hope you will get years of enjoyment out of your clematis plants. If you have any further questions, feel free to call us or stop in and talk with any of our staff.

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## SITE LOCATION

Clematis should be protected from strong winds if possible. The foliage of the plant should get at least 4-6 hours of direct sunlight. The roots, however, should be shaded from the intense heat of the sun. Planting a perennial or small shrub at the base of the clematis will keep the soil around the roots cool and moist. Clematis are not tolerant of poor drainage where they are susceptible to root rot.

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## PLANTING

Begin by digging a hole 18" deep and 18" wide. Mix the soil removed with a blend of topsoil, peat moss, and about one cup of bone meal. It is advised to bury two "eyes" or leaf nodes below the soil surface at the time of planting. The vine will develop roots where the leaves came out of the stem giving the plant a better start in the garden. Continue to backfill until the soil level in the hole is level with the ground. Firm the soil gently and water well. Additional soil may need to be added due to settling after watering.

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## WATERING

Clematis should be watered thoroughly after they are first planted, wetting the entire root ball. Watering after the initial planting should be done only when the plant is showing obvious signs of stress such as slight wilting of the leaves. At that time, water at the base of the plant with sufficient amounts to ensure that the roots are saturated completely. Clematis are very susceptible to foliar diseases; therefore, overhead water and wetting of the foliage should be avoided if possible.

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## FERTILIZING

Greater abundance of flowers and stronger, healthier stems are the benefits of fertilizing a clematis. By incorporating bone meal into the soil at the time of planting encourages good root establishment. During early spring and summer, applications of a soluble fertilizer such as Miracle-Gro® or Plant-tone® Organic Plant Food can be used according to label directions.

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## MULCHING

Clematis prefer their roots kept cool; therefore, mulching around the root system is very important. It is recommended to use a good organic mulch like shredded hardwood applied at a depth of at least 2 inches. Be sure to keep mulch at least a couple inches from the stem since direct contact of the vine with the mulch increases the risk for disease. "Living" mulch such as groundcover or other low plants can also insulate the root system keeping it cool and moist.

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## PRUNING

There are many theories on pruning clematis; some professionals say it depends on variety while others recommend pruning every year. Most clematis do not require pruning for the first three years after planting.

Our experience has been that if the plant is flowering prolifically and appears healthy and vigorous, there is no need to prune the vine. If, however, the vine blooms poorly or only forms flowers at the top of the plant, then the vine can easily be pruned to a spot approximately 6 inches above the ground the following March.

When pruning any plants, it is a good idea to dip your pruning shears in rubbing alcohol before pruning another plant. This will prevent the spread of disease such as Clematis Wilt. If any vine shows signs of Clematis Wilt simply cut it back to the ground and it should recover.

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Pruning Care by Group Number

Group 1: Produces flowers on stems produced the previous season. Only remove the dead or weak stems, after flowering.

Group 2: This group bears flowers on new growth each year, therefore all old growth must be removed completely in February-March before new growth begins.

Group 3: No pruning required except to shape plant.