

# Anthracnose (ăn-thrăk-nōs)

## My tree is dropping leaves that are all shriveled and dead, is it dying?

*Anthracnose* is a fungal problem (fungal diseases often have “funky” names) that we have during years when there is exceptionally wet cool spring weather. It is even worse when there are sequential years with damp cool weather because there is a higher level of fungal inoculum present that hangs around from one year to the next and is not killed off. Like any fungus, it thrives in the conditions we find most often during our frequently cool Chicago springs, rain with temperatures between 50°F to 60°F.

Anthracnose can infect many different species of tree which makes it different than many of the diseases with which we must contend. However, we tend to see it most often on Oaks and Ash, but we have seen it on many different species. It tends to proliferate on trees that are stressed, which can explain why we may see it on one tree and not on another near by. This disease can look pretty scary and cause a lot of leaf drop. Generally, however, it is not permanently harmful to the trees. The part about it that concerns us the most is the symptoms of anthracnose, when they are severe, usually indicate the tree is weaker than we would like it to be.



**Oak Anthracnose**

Even though infection takes place in the spring, April and May, the symptoms in these photos will not appear until later in the growing season.

photo: Lesley Bruce Smith © 2011



**Ash Anthracnose**

photo: Lesley Bruce Smith © 2011

### We do not normally recommend treatment of trees with

**Anthracnose** because trees that are healthy can outgrow this without any long term problems. The exception to this is a tree that is a key specimen in the landscape and is under stress from some other issues. Remember that a healthy tree can stand up to 50% defoliation without ill effects. It is important to focus on the foliage in the tree NOT the dead leaves on the ground, for determining if a tree warrants some sort of treatment. If you have any question as to a need for treatment of a tree that you are

concerned about, call Arborsmith® for a consultation and recommendations. See reverse side for suggestions on promoting tree health.

Arborsmith  
practical solutions to common tree problems  
abstracts®

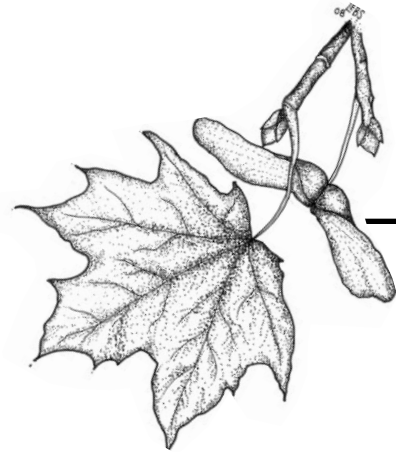
Arborsmith® Ltd. © 2011

## Strategies for maintaining good tree health:

- 🔍 Monitor moisture levels and water your trees when it is hot and droughty, ask for our **Watering Abstract®** for more information on this.
- 🔍 **Mulching** is probably the single most beneficial thing you can do for your trees to promote health and vigor. It preserves moisture levels, lessening the need for watering. It provides healthy rooting opportunities. It moderates soil surface temperatures which mimic a forest like environment. It eliminates competition from turf and other aggressive plants. If you want to help your trees then mulch under them! Ask for our **Mulching Abstract®**
- 🔍 Have your trees inspected every few years, at the least, by a professional, knowledgeable arborist. Arborsmith's® arborists are always inspecting your trees when on site to alert you to any potential problems.
- 🔍 Trim out the dead wood from your trees so it does not become a hosting place for diseases and insects to enter the living part of your tree. On a mature tree this should be done at the minimum, every three to five years. Ask for our **Trimming Abstracts®** for additional information on this.

Arborsmith ® Ltd. © 2011

There is lots of specific, more detailed information regarding this disease available on the web. Just put **Anthracnose** into your search engine.



28915 N. Herky Drive, Suite 102 • Lake Bluff, IL 60044 • [www.thearborsmiths.com](http://www.thearborsmiths.com)

**(847) 634-7734**