

## Mealybugs

With cooler temperatures, many plants that have spent the spring and summer outdoors may be moved inside. Before transporting plants indoors, make a quick inspection for any insects that might be hitching a ride. Any plants that are infested should be placed in a separate area, away from non-infested plants, until insects are under control.

Mealybugs are a common insect often seen on indoor plants. They are small, oval and wingless. These insects have long tails and are covered with wax that makes them look fluffy.

They have piercing-sucking mouthparts which they use to penetrate plant tissue and suck out juices. This can lead to chlorosis (yellowing of the plant), wilting and distortion. With larger infestations, these insects may cause stunted growth, premature leaf drop or death of the plant. Mealybugs are also known for secreting honeydew, which is a sweet, sticky substance on which a fungus called sooty mold can grow.



Tips for mealybug management:

- Use a high pressure water spray to dislodge mealybugs from the plant before moving indoors
- Wipe infested areas with a cottonball dipped in rubbing alcohol (may want to dilute alcohol solution 25-50%)
- Insecticidal soap
- Horticultural oils
- Insecticides labeled for mealybug control
- For severely infested plants, it may be best to throw the plant away and buy a new one

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For more information contact:

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