

Fish Emergency Checklist



Food and Water

Small containers of fish food that doesn't require refrigeration
Secure container with treated water for transport
Water treatment tablets or drops to condition water on arrival

Shelter Needs

Plastic bag with treated water for each fish (short-term) or portable tank with lid
Portable air pump or bubbler for oxygenation
Insulated container to maintain water temperature

Care Instructions

Feeding schedule and amount per day
Water change frequency and any special water treatment needs
Keep fish separated in appropriate containers as necessary

Transportation Tips

Carefully transfer fish into bags or containers with air space
Keep fish in a stable, dark place to reduce stress
Avoid temperature fluctuations by insulating bags/tanks

Specific Requirements

Thermometer for water temperature monitoring
Extra batteries for portable air pumps
Alternative water source or water conditioner

Fish First Aid Cheat Sheet



Ammonia Poisoning (Common in Unfiltered or Stagnant Water)

Symptoms: Red or inflamed gills, lethargy, swimming at the surface (gasping).

Action: Immediately do a partial water change, replacing 25-50% of the tank or container water with clean, dechlorinated water.

Prevention: Avoid overfeeding, remove waste promptly, and, if possible, add live plants to help absorb ammonia.

Fin Rot (Bacterial Infection Due to Poor Water Quality)

Symptoms: Frayed or discolored fins, white edges on fins.

Action: Perform a partial water change and add aquarium salt (if appropriate for the species) to help fight infection. Dosage: typically 1 tablespoon per 5 gallons, but adjust based on species sensitivity.

Prevention: Regular water changes and maintaining clean conditions are key to preventing fin rot.



Swim Bladder Disorder (Commonly Seen in Goldfish and Other Round-Bodied Fish)

Symptoms: Difficulty swimming upright, floating at an angle, or sinking.

Action: Withhold food for 24 hours to allow the swim bladder to reset. After fasting, feed a shelled, cooked pea (for herbivorous fish) to relieve possible constipation, a common cause.

Prevention: Avoid overfeeding, especially with dry food that expands in the fish's stomach.

External Parasites (White Spot Disease or Ich)

Symptoms: White spots on scales, scratching against surfaces, rapid breathing.

Action: Raise water temperature slowly (1-2°F per hour) to about 82°F (if the species can tolerate it), as this speeds up the parasite's lifecycle, making it easier to treat. Add aquarium salt (if safe for the species) to the water as it can help eliminate parasites.

Prevention: Quarantine new fish before adding them to the main tank and keep tank conditions stable to prevent outbreaks.

Oxygen Depletion (Common in Overcrowded or Stagnant Water)



Symptoms: Fish gasping at the surface, lethargy.

Action: Perform a partial water change with fresh, dechlorinated water. If available, add an air stone or battery-powered air pump to increase oxygen.

Prevention: Avoid overcrowding and perform regular water changes to maintain oxygen levels.

Temperature Shock

Symptoms: Sudden lethargy, erratic swimming, or pale color.

Action: Gradually adjust the water temperature. For cold shock, slowly add warmer water. For heat shock, float a sealed plastic bag of cool water in the tank to lower the temperature gradually.

Prevention: Maintain a stable water temperature within the ideal range for your fish species. Avoid exposing the tank to direct sunlight or drafts.

Fungal Infection

Symptoms: Cotton-like patches on the body or fins.

Action: Isolate affected fish if possible. Add a small amount of aquarium salt and raise the temperature slightly if safe for the species. Clean the tank regularly to prevent fungal growth.

Prevention: Keep water quality high, quarantine new fish, and promptly remove uneaten food.

Fish Evacuation Route Planner Cheat Sheet



1. Evacuation Route Planning

Primary Route: _____

Alternative Route: _____

Quiet Rest Stops: _____

Notes for Fish-Friendly Areas _____

2. Pet-Friendly Accommodations

Pet-Friendly Hotels or Facilities:

Hotel Name: _____ | Location: _____

_____ | Phone: _____

Nearby Boarding Options for Fish:

Facility Name: _____ | Location: _____

_____ | Phone: _____

Pet-Friendly Shelters:

Shelter Name: _____ | Location: _____

_____ | Contact: _____

3. Veterinarian and Emergency Contacts

Primary Veterinarian: _____ | Phone: _____

Emergency Vet in Evacuation Area:

Clinic Name: _____ | Location: _____

_____ | Phone: _____

24-Hour Emergency Contact: _____ | Phone: _____

4. Additional Notes and Special Needs

Special Care Needs: _____

Backup Fish Supplies Locations (pet stores en route):

Emergency Contacts for Fish Care (friend/family):

Fish Emergency Go-Bag Checklist



Bag Recommendation: Small, insulated cooler bag to maintain water temperature.

Food and Water

3–7 days of fish food (flakes, pellets, or species-appropriate food) in a small, airtight container

Dechlorinated water in sealed containers for water changes

Small bottle of water conditioner to treat fresh water as needed

First Aid Supplies

Fish-safe antibacterial treatment (for injuries or fin rot prevention)

Aquarium salt in a small container (if appropriate for the species)

Small net and tweezers for handling fish gently

Comfort Items

Portable small tank or plastic container with a secure lid

Insulating material to maintain temperature stability in the temporary container

Battery-operated air pump, if available, to provide oxygenation

Waste Management

Small container for storing dirty water temporarily

Paper towels or cleaning wipes for quick clean-up

Waste bags for any removed substrate or items

Identification and Documents

Recent photo of the fish and physical description for identification

Information about the fish's dietary needs and tank environment requirements

Basic care instructions for species-specific needs