

I NY

I FISH NY Newsletter

Spring 2007

Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS): What is it and how does it affect me?

By Melissa Cohen

Viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) is a serious virus of fresh and saltwater fish that is an emerging disease in the Great Lakes region of the U.S. and Canada. While VHS affects many different species of fish, it does not pose any threat to human health. As its name suggests, VHS causes serious hemorrhaging of fish tissue and can lead to death. Not all fish that have the VHS virus get sick. Some fish can act as carriers of the virus, spreading it to other fish without showing symptoms themselves.

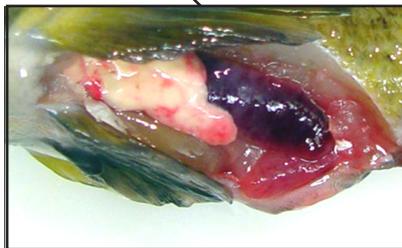
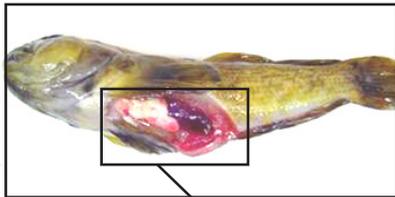


Photo courtesy of the Aquatic Animal Health Program, Cornell University.

Round goby from the St. Lawrence River with VHS, which is generally found in the kidney, liver, and spleen.

VHS can be spread between water bodies by the transport of fish between waters, such as through stocking or the use of baitfish. For this reason, anglers must not transport fish from one body of water to another. All baitfish caught and used by anglers can only be used in the same water from which they were caught. Store-bought bait may be used only if purchased from a source with a fish health inspection report certifying the fish as disease free. It is important to note that killifish and mummichogs purchased from bait shops on Long Island and New York City are most likely not from an inspected source and may not be used as bait in freshwater. These fish may only be used for saltwater fishing.

Emergency Regulations have been promulgated by NYSDEC to prevent the spread of VHS and can be found at: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/propregs/#10e>

More information on this topic as well as ways to further prevent the spread of fish diseases and the transfer of invasive species can be found at: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/fish/vhsv.html>



ASK KATIE ? Q: Why is fishing line rated in “pound test?” What is it and how does it work?

A: Fishing line is generally packaged and sold according to the straight line breaking strength. In other words, 12-pound test line should not break when any section of new line is subjected to 12 pounds or less of pull. Think of using the line to lift a 12-pound bowling ball off the floor. Most fishing line sold commercially will actually not break at much higher weights than the label reads; a 12-pound line might lift a bowling ball of 16 pounds or more without breaking. One exception is that line rated for setting angling records by the International Game Fish Association must be manufactured at closer tolerances than standard line and should break right around the labeled pound test. This line tends to cost more, but you don't need to use it for normal recreational use. Keep in mind that, during a fight, fish can apply force to the line much higher than the fish's actual weight. A 3-pound fluke can easily break 6-pound test line, especially when it shakes its head right at the boat and the line is short. Understanding proper use of the drag on your reel to avoid breaking the line is also important, but that's a discussion for another day.



FISHING HOTSPOTS

Long Island: Argyle Lake

Type: Freshwater, 24 acres, maximum depth of 4 feet

Where: Argyle Memorial Park, Town of Babylon Village; between Railroad Avenue (Route 12) to the north and Montauk Highway (Route 27A) to the south in Babylon; LIRR Babylon Train to Babylon, Lake is 2 blocks west of station

Access:

Boat Launch: No

Handicap Accessible: No

Shoreline: Yes, public

Species and Rules for Site: (minimum size, daily limit, open season)

Largemouth bass: 12", 5, 1st Saturday in June – Nov. 30; catch and release only from Dec. 1 – Mar. 15

Trout: Any size, 3, all year

Carp: Any size, any number, all year

Sunfish: Any size, 15, all year

Yellow perch: Any size, 15, all year

Brown bullhead: Any size, any number, all year

Other:

For general rules about freshwater fishing go to: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/fish/fishregs/fishregs-guide0608.pdf>

For NYSDEC trout stocking locations and information go to: <http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/ifishny/2007-TroutStockingMap.pdf> and <http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/ifishny/2007-TroutStocking-List.pdf>



NYC: Dyckman Street Pier

North of the George Washington Bridge (GWB), striped bass season starts a month earlier and the size limit is lower

Type: Saltwater, NYC Parks public pier

Where: Dyckman Street off Riverside Drive

Access:

Boat launch: Yes, hand launch

Handicap Accessible: Yes

Shoreline: Yes, public

Species and Rules for Site: (minimum size, daily limit, open season)

Striped bass (north of GWB): 18", 2, March 15-Dec 15

American eel: 6, 50, all year

American shad: Any size, 5, all year

Other:

For general rules about saltwater fishing:

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/df-wmr/marine/finfish/swflaws.html>



Photo courtesy of I FISH NY staff

FACT OR FISHIN' seafood health advice



Confused about omega-3s and the benefits of eating fish? First, what are omega-3s? They are essential nutrients, types of polyunsaturated fatty acids that humans cannot manufacture, so must obtain through their diet. Why are omega-3s important? Our cell membranes are largely composed of fatty acids; healthy cell membranes allow for proper nutrient exchange, water balance, and waste excretion into and out of cells.

What does that mean for your health? While a wide range of health effects have and are still being studied, omega-3s seem to have the most pronounced effects on cardiovascular health and neurological development; increased fish consumption has been linked to lower coronary heart disease and mothers' fish intake seems to increase their children's brain development. However, the positive effects may be complicated by possible negative side effects from contaminants (check your local health advisories).

So, what are the best sources of omega-3s? Some fish are richer in omega-3 than others: fatty cold water fish, such as herring, mackerel (Pacific, jack, Spanish), salmon (Atlantic, king, pink), bluefin tuna, and whitefish. There are also non-fish sources of omega-3s such as walnuts, kiwis, and flax seeds. Omega-3s and contaminants aside, you can still enjoy the other benefits of fishing—the joy of being outdoors, learning new skills, and hopefully, catching a few fish. To learn more about omega-3s and the other health benefits of eating fish, go to

<http://www.seagrantsunysb.edu/SeafoodTechnology/seafoodpubs.htm>

Contributors

Steering Committee Members: Melissa Cohen, Jim Gilmore, Chart Guthrie, Steve Heins, Tim Huss, Robert J. Kent, Greg Kozlowski, Alan Mapes, Ron Pierce, Ed Woltmann

Newsletter Staff: Sarah Bruner, Nim Lee, Malynda Nichol

Contributing Writers: Steve Heins, Nim Lee, Melissa Cohen, Malynda Nichol

I FISH NY is a collaborative program between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York Sea Grant.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

I FISH NY provides all the tackle and bait you'll need. Just call and reserve your spot today!

Long Island:

Spring Family Freshwater Fishing Festival

Saturday, April 14th
Belmont Lake State Park
10 am – 4 pm

Saltwater Clinic and Derby

Saturday, May 19th
Babylon Sportfishing Center
10 am – 2 pm
*Pre-registration

NYC:

3rd Annual Fish Parade

Saturday, June 2nd
Hunts Point Riverside Park
Noon - 3 pm

Free Fishing Weekend with Bayside Anglers

Saturday, June 23rd
Kissena Park
11 am - 1 pm



To get more information,
log on to <http://www.ifishnewyork.org>
To ask questions or register,
call 718.482.4940 (NYC) or 631.444.0283 (LI).

