Chalara ash dieback questions and answers

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How can I check I have correctly identified an ash tree?
If you need any help to confirm you are looking at an ash tree please use the Woodland Trust’s Tree ID App or the tree identification pages on the Forestry Commission’s website. When reporting via Tree Alert you will be guided through an identification process.

Can I find Chalara ash dieback on any other trees?
No, it is only associated with ash. However please note that it is not found on mountain ash (rowan trees), which is actually not an ash tree.

Is it visible all year round?
Yes, there are different signs and symptoms to look out for across the year. Try to become familiar with what you are looking for and when so that it is easier to spot when you are out and about. Our guide shows you the key signs to look out for.

I think I’ve seen Chalara ash dieback but am not sure so what do I do?
If you have compared what you have seen against the images in our guide but are still unsure take a look at Observatree’s Chalara ash dieback Field ID Guide which has further details.

Can it be confused with anything else?
There are other pests and diseases that affect ash trees. Our guide should help you be confident with symptoms. In the autumn you might see clumps of sometimes dark-coloured ash keys (seeds), retained on the trees after the leaves have fallen. This is quite normal, but from a distance they can be mistaken for blackened leaves.

Do I have to report a sighting?
We are keen to know the extent and spread of the fungus. Suspected sightings should be reported via the Forestry Commission’s Tree Alert website. In Northern Ireland please report via the TreeCheck website, phone app or by emailing planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk.

Should I take any leaf or branch samples?
No. Please use photographs to illustrate any signs or symptoms. Follow proper biosecurity practices so that you don’t help the spread the disease.

If I report and it is Chalara ash dieback will the tree(s) need to be chopped down?
Unfortunately once an ash tree is infected it cannot be cured. However, mature ash trees can live for a long time and, even when infected, support a wide range of woodland wildlife. If you own infected ash trees you don’t need to take any particular action unless a plant health authority serves you with a statutory Plant Health Notice.