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- submitted by DVross, update by Kmuda

While many of us strive to provide our fish the best possible environment as far as habitat and cleanliness are concerned, the possibility that you will encounter a sick fish among your stock is inevitable. I have found that the best way to combat these is to have a basic understanding of the common medications and have a finite quantity of these beforehand in the likely event you are faced with an illness. Sometimes speed is of the essence and we don't have the luxury of waiting for something to be shipped or pay the exorbitant prices at the local pet shops for many medications.

I have attempted to provide you with a list of the most common medications you may require. This list is by no means complete but I have strove to list those medications that are broad-ranged (can treat a wide variety of illnesses) and are friendly to your biological filter. In the event that a given medicine cannot be used on a particular class of fish, or it poses specific risks I will attempt to highlight those specific caveats.

If you have any suggestions/corrections, please feel free to respond to this post and I will incorporate or correct as necessary

Essential Medicines

1. Coppersafe
2. Maracyn
3. Maracyn-2
4. Clout

5. Nitrofurazone
6. Metronidazole
7. Melafix
8. Levamisole Hydrochloride
9. Aquarium Salt
10. SeaChem KanaPlex

Coppersafe

- Manufacturer: Mardel Website: http://web.archive.org/web/20070303135538/http://www.mardel-labs.com/mardel/f_amedi.html
- Description: Coppersafe is a safe, stable and non-staining chelated copper treatment which is effective in fighting Ich (Ichthyophthirius multifiliis),
- Flukes (Gyrodactylus), Anchor Worms, Chilodinella, Velvet, Protozoan diseases and other freshwater external parasites.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: Yes
- Additional Notes: Before use, remove invertebrates from tank. Coppersafe may be harmful to plants, amphibians and some snails. Does not
- overdose. Ensure when treatment is ongoing, you dose the replacement water added to the tank (i.e. if 25g of water is removed, add additional Coppersafe to treat 25g of water. This will ensure dosage remains correct.) It is persistent which means it will remain active in the aquarium for over one month. Carbon can be replaced to aid in the removal of the medication after treatment but water changes are the quickest way to remove it after treatment has ended.

Maracyn

- Manufacturer: Mardel Website: http://web.archive.org/web/20070303135538/http://www.mardel-labs.com/mardel/f_amedi.html
- Description: Broad-spectrum, nontoxic antibiotic tablets to treat infections of body fungus (grayish-white material covering mouth; may spread to fins, tail, and body), fin and tail rot, popeye, gill disease, and secondary infections in freshwater aquariums. No water changes, pH, or temperature adjustments necessary if readings are in ideal range.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: If an activated carbon filter is more than 5 days old, it may be left in place. However, fresh activated carbon may reduce the activity of medications and should be removed.
- Additional Notes: Treat for five days even if visible signs disappear. After treatment, new activated carbon or charcoal removes any remaining color from water. This product, like all Mardel products, may be used in conjunction with other Mardel Freshwater products.

Maracyn-2

- Manufacturer: Mardel Website: http://web.archive.org/web/20070303135538/http://www.mardel-labs.com/mardel/f_amedi.html

- Description: Broad-spectrum, nontoxic antibiotic tablets to treat infections of fin and tail rot, popeye, gill disease, dropsy, septicemia, secondary and internal infections. Effective even when fish won't eat in freshwater aquariums. No water changes, pH, or temperature adjustments necessary if readings are in ideal range.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: If an activated carbon filter is more than 5 days old, it may be left in place. However, fresh activated carbon may reduce the activity of medications and should be removed.
- Additional Notes: Treat for five days even if visible signs disappear. After treatment, new activated carbon or charcoal removes any remaining color from water. This product may be used in conjunction with Maracyn®, Maracide® or Coppersafe®.

Clout

- Manufacturer: Aquatic Products Website: <http://web.archive.org/web/20070303135538/http://www.aq-products.com/>
- Description: This medication for freshwater & marine fish is effective against Ick, Argulus, Leeches, Diogenetic Flukes, Body Fungus, Lernia (Anchor Worm), Parasitic Copepods, Monogenetic Flukes, Planaria, Hexamita, Epistylis, Hydra and Trichodina.
- Safe for Biological Filter: No Remove Activated Carbon: Yes, but do not discontinue filtration
- Additional Notes: Best used in a quarantine environment. DO NOT USE WITH Piranhas, Metynnis Species, Scaleless Fish, Bottom Feeders, Marine Sharks, Lion Fish or Invertebrates. This product will stain the aquarium silicone. Clout is considered a "last resort" medication as it is very toxic.

Nitrofurazone

- Manufacturer: Packaged as Furacyn by Aquatronics Website: Available at most aquatic retailers
- Description: Antibiotic for treating: red areas, body streaks, white body slime, open ulcers, wasting away, bacterial infections, and ammonia exposure.
- Safe for Biological Filter: No Remove Activated Carbon: Yes, but do not discontinue filtration
- Additional Notes: Do not use with invertebrates. Water discoloration will occur, best used in a quarantine environment.

Metronidazole

- Manufacturer: Packaged as HEX-A-MIT by Aquatronics Description: For effective treatment of white dots, body velvet, HITH, HLLLE, weight loss, wasting away, unexplained fish death, Hexamita.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: Yes
- Additional Notes: It is almost impossible to overdose this drug but it is recommended to follow the manufacturer's recommendations as there is little research to discount possible carcinogenic effects.

Melafix

- Manufacturer: Aquarium Pharmaceuticals
- Description: Melafix is a patented 1% mixture of CAS Melaleuca (Tea Tree Oil) which is used to enhance healing in fish. Especially useful in healing superficial injuries such as ulcers, bruises, scrapes, cuts, lost scales, etc.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: Yes
- Additional Notes: Although it claims to have antibacterial properties to cure flexibactor (mouth rot) and fin and tail rot, this is currently in dispute. This medication is better used, and has proven effective, for minor injuries.

Levamisole Hydrochloride

- Manufacturer: Available at most feed stores and coops in oblate form.
- Description: Levacide Levasole (levamisole hydrochloride) is a broad spectrum anthelmintic which has proven effective against Camallanus worms and other internal parasites.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: Yes
- Additional Notes: It is impossible to overdose this drug. Studies have shown that after treatment, fish actually exhibit a higher tolerance to future re-infestation. Levamisole base is potentially inert at a pH above 7.0 so you should make certain the medication you are using is Levamisole Hydrochloride (Levamisole HCL). The addition of the Hydrochloride ion makes the medicine stable in higher pH water.

Seachem KanaPlex

- Manufacturer: SeaChem: <http://www.seachem.com>
- Description: Broad-spectrum, nontoxic antibiotic tablets to treat infections of fin and tail rot, popeye, gill disease, dropsy, septicemia, secondary and internal infections. Effective even when fish won't eat in freshwater aquariums. No water changes, pH, or temperature adjustments necessary if readings are in ideal range. Works especially well against bacterial pitting type ailments.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: If an activated carbon filter is more than 5 days old, it may be left in place. However, fresh activated carbon may reduce the activity of medications and should be removed.
- Additional Notes: Treat for five days even if visible signs disappear. After treatment, new activated carbon or charcoal removes any remaining color from water.

Aquarium Salt

- Description: Salt works well against many protozoan parasites such as Costia, Trichodina and Chilodonella as well as flukes and other ectoparasites. It can also assist osmoregulation problems caused by bacterial ulcers; help clear congested gills as well as supporting fish suffering from stress. Because it works in a different way to most disease treatment, it is safer than many pond treatments and will not adversely affect biological filtration in pond filters. It is generally used at fairly high rates in short-term baths or dips, but can be used as a long-term supportive treatment in ponds. Also used to stimulate slime-coat growth.
- Safe for Biological Filter: Yes Remove Activated Carbon: No
- Additional Notes: See listing below for recommended salt types.

Good salts:

1. Kosher salts
2. Rock salts
3. Freshwater Aquarium salt
4. Canning Salt
5. Non-Iodized salt

- Bad Salts:

1. Salts designed for water softener systems. These typically contain an anti-caking agent known as Yellow Prussiate of Soda. When this non-caking agent is exposed to sunlight it can create hydrogen cyanide which is toxic to the fish.
2. Iodized salts. Although there is no evidence to support the theory that iodine in small quantities is not harmful to fish, the lack of evidence to the contrary dictates caution.
3. Salts designed for reef environments as they contain other trace elements that may be harmful to the fish and their environment.
4. Epsom salts. This contains magnesium sulfate which can increase the bowel activity of the fish. But is a good remedy to cure constipation which is another [FAQ](#) in itself.

- For more details on using salt in treating ICH, refer the [this page](#).
- For an indepth view of salt as a treatment, please review [this external link](#).

References:

http://www.koivet.com/html/articles/articles_results.php?article_id=104&category=13&p;search_term=MelaFix <http://www.inkmkr.com/Fish/CamellanusTreatment.pdf>

http://www.aquarticles.com/articles/ponds/Kebus_Salt_Treatments.html

<http://www.fishdoc.co.uk/treatments/salt.htm>

<http://www.aquariumadvice.com/showquestion.php?faq=2&fldAuto=32>