





Healthy corals  have a symbiotic relationship with microscopic algae called zooxanthellae that live in their tissue. These algae  produce the coral's primary food source and give them their color. When ocean water is too warm , corals expel their algae, rendering the coral tissue translucent and making the animal's white skeleton clearly visible . These events are called coral bleaching because its now stark white appearance makes it look as though the coral has been "bleached" of color (in addition to having lost its main food source). Corals can survive a bleaching event and recruit new algae, but repeated events cause stress and decrease colony health, leading to coral death.



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