

# TOPICS MENTIONED IN THE SCRIPT

## 1. What Are Pesticides?

Any substance used to prevent, destroy, repel or mitigate insects, rodents, fungi, weeds, or any other organism considered a pest.

- If the word ends with "cide" it's probably considered a pesticide.
- Pesticides include but are not limited to: insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides plant growth regulators, defoliant (pesticides that remove leaves from plants), desiccants (pesticides used for drying plant foliage), and insect repellants.
- Even home products used for disinfecting surfaces are considered pesticides. Always look for an EPA Registration number and read the label on the container.

## 2. Pesticide Symptoms

Pesticide symptoms vary among different pesticides. For example, pesticides that control weeds (herbicides) can be less toxic than some pesticides used to control insects or rodents.

Symptoms/signs of pesticide exposure may include but are not limited to:

### *mild acute symptoms*

- headache, fatigue, weakness, dizziness, restlessness, nervousness, perspiration, nausea, diarrhea, loss of appetite, loss of weight, thirst, moodiness, soreness in joints, skin irritation, eye irritation, irritation of the nose and throat

### *moderate acute symptoms*

- nausea, diarrhea, excessive saliva, stomach cramps, excessive perspiration, trembling, no muscle coordination, muscle twitches, extreme weakness, mental confusion, blurred vision, difficulty in breathing, cough, rapid pulse, flushed or yellow skin, weeping

### *severe acute symptoms:*

- fever, intense thirst, increased rate of breathing, vomiting, uncontrollable muscle twitches, pinpoint pupils, convulsions, inability to breathe, unconsciousness

**Chronic toxicity** refers to the effects of long-term or repeated lower level exposures to a toxic substance. The effects of chronic exposure do not appear immediately after first exposure and may take years to produce signs and symptoms. Examples of chronic poisoning effects may include:

- Cancer
- Inability to become pregnant

- Birth defects
- Nervous system disorders
- Damage to organs, such as the lungs or liver
- Damage to the immune system

The effects of chronic toxicity, as with acute toxicity, are dose-related. In other words, low-level exposure to chemicals that have potential to cause long-term effects may not cause immediate injury, but repeated exposures through careless handling or misuse can greatly increase the risk of chronic adverse effects.

### **3. When working where pesticides are applied**

- Attend the required Worker Protection Standard Training to better understand how to protect yourself from pesticides
- Obey posted warning signs
- Do not go into a field with a Restricted Entry Interval (REI) that has not expired.
- Wear proper clothing (long sleeves, gloves, hat, and no short pants)
- Wash hands and face before meals & toilet use
- Do not take children with you to work areas
- Do not take agricultural pesticides or empty pesticide containers home

### **4. Workers' Rights**

- Employer must assure that workers have been trained under the Worker Protection Standards (WPS) requirements
- Employer responsible for furnishing decontamination supplies within ¼ mile of workers (soap, water, and single use towels)
- Report incidents and possible pesticide exposures – an employer can not take a retaliatory action for trying to comply with the Worker Protection Standards
- Employer must provide transportation to nearest medical facility in the event of an exposure

### **5. What if you get a pesticide exposure?**

- Notify your supervisor or boss
- Call, go, or be taken immediately to doctor
- Note name of pesticide and “restricted entry level” time lapse
- When trouble breathing allow fresh air and loosen clothes
- Follow label directions when no other help is available
- When eyes are contaminated flush with water for 15 minutes

### **6. Don't bring it home**

- *Your car.* Keep it vacuumed out and free from pesticide residues.
- *Your clothes and boots/shoes.* Work clothes and boots/shoes have a higher possibility of having pesticide residues if you work in areas that have been treated with pesticides. Change out of work clothes and take a shower or bath before contact with family members.

- *Your skin.* Pesticide residues can be on your skin. Wash your skin with soap and water before you contact other family members.

## **7. Protect your family—especially children**

Children are not “little adults”. They may be more vulnerable to environmental exposures than adults because:

- Their bodily systems are still developing.
- They eat more, drink more, and breathe more in proportion to their body size.
- Their behavior can expose them more to chemicals and organisms.
- Change out of your work clothes and bathe with soap and water as soon as you arrive home.
- Avoid contact until you bathe and change into clean clothing.
- Wash clothes separately from the family laundry - run a separate cycle between other family laundry.
- Teach and remind children about the risk of pesticides and their residues.
- Keep the poison control phone number handy.

## **8. Other pesticides in the home**

- If using pesticides around the home, read label for safe application.
- Do not use more than the label directions say to use. You can be harming everyone in the home (yourself, spouse, kids, pets).
- Lock up or keeping pesticides out of reach of children.
- Don't use or store pesticides in containers that are not meant for pesticides (such as soda bottles, milk or juice containers, etc).

## **9. Tips for minimizing the need for house-hold pesticides**

- Throw out trash.
- Keep garbage cans covered and away from house.
- Clean up pet and animal waste.
- Empty out any stagnant water.
- Don't let dirty dishes linger for too long.
- Throw out any leftover food.
- Caulk and seal areas by doors and windows.
- Keep areas in and around the home clean – it prevents pests, thus minimizing the use of pesticides.

## **References:**

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/safely.htm>

[http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/safely\\_sp.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/safely_sp.htm) - (above link in Spanish)

[http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/Publications/Cit\\_Guide/citguide.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/Publications/Cit_Guide/citguide.pdf)