Pesticide Poisoning, Residues in the Indoor Environment, Assessment and Health Effects

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Learning Objectives

• Recognize the diversity of the chemistry and toxicology of common pesticides
  – Emphasis on indoor exposures
• Understand chemical properties of pesticides, and their impact on human exposure pathways
• Provide specific examples of clinically important pesticides that may be encountered indoors
  – Exposure pathways and scenarios
  – Exposure assessment
  – Clinical toxicology
• Recognize emerging areas of research in pesticide toxicology
  – Biomonitoring, health implications of chronic, low-level exposures
Specific Examples of Pesticides and Risks from Indoor Exposure

- Organophosphate insecticides
- N-methylcarbamate insecticides
- Mothballs
- Rodenticides
Pesticides

• Any substance intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest
  – Repellents (solid mothballs), insecticides (liquids, aerosols, vapors), rodenticides (solid baits, powders)
Residential Use of Pesticides

• High-risk subgroups
• Possible risks from chronic exposure
  – Asthma
  – Cancer
  – Endocrine disruption
• Concerns have led to significant regulatory decisions in past 15 years
Insecticides and the Indoor Environment: Organophosphates

- Common chemical structure
- Central phosphorus atom
- Double bond to either oxygen or sulfur
- Two alkyl groups bound to oxygen
- A leaving group (X) bound to either oxygen or sulfur
  - Highly variable
  - Volatility and vapor pressure depend on chemistry of leaving group
Organophosphates: Exposure Pathways in the Indoor Environment

- **Inhalation**
  - Highest risk for insect strips (DDVP), and aerosol formulations

- **Dermal contact**
  - Bioavailability depends on specific organophosphate
  - Can cause systemic toxicity

- **Ingestion**
  - Hand-to-mouth activity with a treated surface
    - Important for pediatric exposures

- **Agricultural workers (and families) as high-risk populations**
Chemical Fate of Organophosphates

- Organophosphates undergo chemical changes in the environment (indoors and outdoors)
- Transformation reactions result in detoxification
- Residues of active ingredient and detoxification residues can remain on surfaces indoors
- Chlorpyrifos example
  - Undergoes hydrolysis to dialkylphosphate and trichloropyridinol (TCP)

![Chemical structures of Chlorpyrifos (CIP), diethylthiophosphate (DEPT), and 3,5,6-trichloro-2-pyridinol (TCP)]
Organophosphate Residues in the Indoor Environment

- Children’s Exposure to Persistent Pesticides Study (Morgan MK et al., J Expo Analysis Environ Epi. 2004;1-13)
- The Reliability of Using Urinary Biomarkers to Estimate Children’s Exposures to Chlorpyrifos and Diazinon (Morgan MK et al., J Expo Analysis Environ Epi. 2010 (in press)
- Chlorpyrifos and degradation product (TCP) were detectable in 100% of dust and surface wipe samples in homes and daycare centers
Organophosphate Toxicokinetics: Absorption

what the body does to the pesticide

Absorption

Distribution

Metabolism

Elimination

Internal dose depends on exposure pathway and bioavailability

• Contrast dermal exposure with oral and inhalation exposure
Organophosphate Toxicokinetics: Distribution to Nervous System

Absorption $\Rightarrow$ Distribution $\Rightarrow$ Target

Synapse (nerve-nerve connections)

Nerve-Muscle Junction

With Permission: Purdue Pesticide Programs
Organophosphate Toxicodynamics

- Organophosphates are inhibitors of cholinesterase enzymes
  - Cholinesterase enzymes are found in insects and mammals
  - Different types of cholinesterase enzymes
    - Butyrylcholinesterase (in blood)
      - role in drug, xenobiotic metabolism
    - Acetylcholinesterase (in nervous system)
      - Role in neurotransmitter (acetylcholine) metabolism
  - OP’s differ in their potency
    - High: methyl parathion
    - Lower: chlorpyrifos, malathion
Toxicodynamic Effects of Organophosphates

- Cholinesterase inhibitors block the metabolism of acetylcholine (ACh)
  - Leads to accumulation (excess) of acetylcholine in the nervous system
  - Excess acetylcholine leads to excessive activity at acetylcholine receptors in nervous system
    - Neuron-muscle junction
    - Parasympathetic (autonomic) nervous system
      - Responsible for “rest and digest” processes in body
    - Central nervous system (brain)
Organophosphate Toxicodynamics

- **Serine (Ser)** amino acid residue at active site of cholinesterase enzyme
  - Catalytic site for esterase activity
  - Breaks down ACh to choline and acetic acid
- **OP’s** bind to, and phosphorylate the active site of cholinesterase
  - Competitively inhibits the enzyme from breaking down ACh
- **Significant differences exist among OP’s in their potency for cholinesterase inhibition**
  - Methyl parathion (higher potency)
  - Chlorpyrifos, malathion (lower potency)
Effects of Cholinesterase Inhibitors (OP’s) on the Nervous System

• ACh accumulates at neuron-muscle junction
  – Excessive muscle stimulation
  – Fasiculations (abnormal contractions) followed by
    • Weakness
    • Paralysis

• ACh accumulates in central nervous system
  – Altered mental status
  – Confusion, disorientation, delirium, seizures

• ACh accumulates at receptors for parasympathetic (autonomic) nervous system
  – “rest and digest” functions
  – Cholinergic toxidrome
    • SLUDGE mnemonic
      – Salivation, lacrimation, urination, defecation/diarrhea, gastrointestinal tract symptoms (nausea, vomiting), emesis/eyes (miosis)
  – Effects reversed by atropine
    • Atropine binds to, competitively blocks (antagonist at) acetylcholine receptors in parasympathetic nervous system
Organophosphate Toxicodynamics

• Fate of inhibited cholinesterase enzyme
  – OP-active site bond can spontaneously hydrolyze, regenerating active enzyme
  – Nucleophilic attack at the phosphorylated enzyme can hydrolyze the OP-active site bond (regenerating enzyme)
    • Antidote (2-PAM, a.k.a. pralidoxime) used for acute poisonings by OP insecticides
    • Modifies the toxicodynamic effects
  – The OP-active site bond becomes more stable, and enzyme is permanently inhibited
    • “aging”
    • Regeneration requires new synthesis of cholinesterase enzymes

Cholinesterase enzyme

Active site Anionic site

aging (time)

O

CH₃

O

O

O

O

O

CH₃

CH₃

CH₃

CH₃

CH₃
• Acetylcholine as neurotransmitter
  – Nerve-muscle junction
    • Nicotinic ACh receptors
  – Neurotransmitter in PNS (parasympathetic)
    • Muscarinic ACh receptors
  – Neurotransmitter in CNS
• Organophosphates inhibit cholinesterase enzymes, causing accumulation of ACh in nervous system
Clinical and Laboratory Diagnosis of Organophosphate Poisoning

• Exposure history, clinical signs and symptoms
  – Recognize common exposure scenarios, high-risk populations
  – Assess for cholinergic signs and symptoms, and physical examination findings
• Cholinergic symptoms correlate with extent of cholinesterase enzyme inhibition
  – Can develop when enzyme inhibited to less than 70-80% of usual activity
• Cholinesterase enzyme activity (extent of inhibition) can be measured in the blood
  – Serum (pseudocholinesterase)
  – Red blood cells (RBC cholinesterase)
    • Correlates better with enzyme activity in nervous system
    • A more specific (but indirect) biomarker of effect
Methyl parathion: Adverse Health Effects from Indoor Misuse

• 1994-6: Ohio (Lorain County)
  – Hundreds of residences affected
  – Cost to clean-up greater than $20 million

• Illegal misuse of methyl parathion by unlicensed pesticide applicators

http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/alerts/961213.html
Methyl parathion: Adverse Health Effects from Indoor Misuse

• Rubin, et al. (2002)
• Symptoms reported after application
  – Headache, nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, abdominal cramping, sweating, salivation, confusion
  – Higher proportion of children affected
  – Some cases were not recognized as organophosphate poisoning
    • Gastroenteritis, dehydration, URI
Methyl parathion: Adverse Health Effects from Indoor Misuse

• Rubin, et al. (2002)
• Case series
  – 43 year old female with multiple ED visits over a 1 year period
  – Had monthly spraying in her residence
  – Primary complaint of wheezing, headache, coughing
  – One visit with nausea, vomiting
  – No fever or abnormal vitals
  – Physical examination unremarkable
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Pesticide Residues in the Home: Organophosphates

- Organophosphates are no longer registered for most indoor residential uses in the U.S.
- Importance of misapplications, storage of old products
- Understand the importance of exposure history and physical exam findings
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of cholinergic toxidrome
- Applications and limitations of biomarkers (of exposure and effect)
Other Pesticide Residues in the Home: N-methyl carbamate Insecticides

- Chemistry
  - N-methyl carbamates
    - Esters of carbamic acid
  - Some N-methyl carbamates occur naturally
    - Physostigmine (from the calabar bean)
      - Modern pharmaceutical uses
  - Others widely used for crop protection

\[
\text{H}_3\text{C-}\text{N}\equiv\text{O} \quad \text{O} \quad \text{O} \quad \text{R}
\]

Physostigmine
N-methyl Carbamates (Examples)

Physostigmine (drug)

Carbaryl

Aldicarb

Methomyl
N-methyl Carbamate Toxicokinetics (Humans)

- Most are well-absorbed from ingestion pathways (orally bioavailable)
- Some (aldicarb) have significant dermal bioavailability
- Distribution varies by chemical structure
  - Generally greater than plasma volume
  - Some are charged (ionized) at physiological pH (pH=7.4)
    - Affects distribution to target organs
- Metabolic pathways include ester hydrolysis
  - Similar to what occurs in environment
- Elimination in urine
  - Not persistent compounds
  - Generally, short elimination $t_{1/2}$ (hours)
N-methyl carbamate Toxicodynamics

- **Reversible** inhibitors of cholinesterase enzymes
- Bind to active (esterase) site (serine residue) on cholinesterase enzymes
- Inhibits the active site of cholinesterase enzyme
- Interaction with inhibited enzyme is unstable, spontaneously dissociates to re-form **active** enzyme
Poisonings from Illegal Indoor use of N-methylcarbamates as Rodenticides

• Nelson, et al. (2001)
• Symptoms reported after application of *Tres Pasitos*
  – “Three Little Steps”
  – Rodenticide that could be legally purchased in Dominican Republic
  – Many victims had recently emigrated from Dominican Republic
  – Cluster of incidents resulting in acute cholinergic toxidrome
    • Included intentional (suicidal exposures) and accidental exposures from residential misapplication
  – Active ingredient was found to be aldicarb
    • Not registered for indoor uses in U.S.

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\text{Aldicarb}
\]
Poisonings from Illegal Indoor use Aldicarb (Tres Pasitos) as Rodenticide

• Nelson, et al. (2001)

• Symptoms reported after application
  – parents found 2 yr-old eating Tres Pasitos and rice mixture, which they had applied
  – Lethargic, vomiting, pulmonary rales, pinpoint pupils
  – child improved after 3 mg atropine, admitted to ICU
  – extubated following day and completely recovered
Illegal Pesticide Incidents: Public Health Response

• Clinicians should be aware of regulatory and enforcement agencies for suspected pesticide poisoning incidents:
  – In some cases, pesticide poisoning is a reportable condition to public health agencies
  – [http://www.npic.orst.edu/mcapro/PesticideIncidentReporting.pdf](http://www.npic.orst.edu/mcapro/PesticideIncidentReporting.pdf)
Illegal Pesticide Incidents: Clean-Up and Enforcement Issues

- **Clean-up is complicated**
  - Other ingredients in the formulation (not disclosed on label)
  - Manufacturer of product may be able to provide specific information
    - [http://npic.orst.edu/manuf.htm](http://npic.orst.edu/manuf.htm)

- **Regulatory and enforcement agencies**
  - Varies by state
    - [http://npic.orst.edu/state1.htm](http://npic.orst.edu/state1.htm)
Other Important Pesticide Residues in the Indoor Environment: Mothballs

• Commonly contain naphthalene or paradichlorobenzene
  – Mothballs undergo sublimation
• Widely available for consumer use
• Misuse of mothball products is common
  – Examples: placement in air handling systems or crawlspace
• Accidental (pediatric) exposures are also very common

naphthalene
paradichlorobenzene
Pesticide Residues in the Indoor Environment: Naphthalene Mothballs

- Other potential sources of naphthalene indoors
  - Tobacco smoke, other products of combustion
- Presence of mothballs is an important contributor to indoor air levels of naphthalene
- ATSDR has established a minimum risk level (MRL) for naphthalene
  - 0.0007 parts per million (ppm)
Pesticide Residues in the Indoor Environment: Naphthalene Toxicology

- Ingestion exposure is most common pathway for serious toxicity
- Hepatic metabolism
  - Metabolites produce oxidative stress
  - Oxidation of hemoglobin
    - Heinz Bodies
  - Increased susceptibility to hemolysis
  - Delay in onset of signs and symptoms
    - 1-2 days
  - Increased susceptibility among individuals with G6PD deficiency
- Other effects, airway injury/inflammation, narcosis

Heinz Bodies in RBC’s
Other Important Pesticide: Paradichlorobenzene Mothballs

- Paradichlorobenzene is a very common ingredient in mothballs
- Similar patterns of exposure with naphthalene mothballs
- Toxicology is different
  - Hemolytic reactions are unlikely
  - Ingestion exposures
    - Nausea, vomiting
  - Inhalation exposures
    - Headache, mucous membrane irritation
Pesticide Residues in the Indoor Environment: Tetramine

- tetramethylene disulphotetramine
- odorless, tasteless, and water-soluble white crystalline powder
- Binds noncompetitively and irreversibly to the gamma-aminobutyric acid receptor on neuronal cell membranes and blocks chloride channels
- WHO classifies as an extremely hazardous pesticide
Tetramine: Adverse Health Effects from Indoor Misuse

• 2002: New York City
  – First reported exposure case in United States
  – 15-month-old infant found playing with white rodenticide powder that parents had bought from China and applied in their kitchen
  – 15 min. later, infant experienced generalized seizures, and taken to ER
    • Seizures refractory to lorazepam, phenobarbital, and pyridoxine

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5210a4.htm
Tetramine: Adverse Health Effects from Indoor Misuse

• Zhang, et al. (2010)
• Literature review of tetramine poisonings in China between 1998 to 2010
  – 40 cases (20 male/20 female)
  – Ages 5-62 years (median 35 years)
  – 10 of the 40 cases occurred by accidental exposure
Pesticide Residues in the Indoor Environment: Key Concepts

• Pesticides have multiple mechanisms of toxicity
  – Recognize toxidromes
  – Recognize common and serious clinical presentations

• Serious morbidity, mortality can arise from misuse, misapplication
  – Illegal applications
  – Unregistered pesticides

• Clinicians should participate in notifying public health authorities when appropriate
Current Areas of Research in Pesticide Toxicology: Biomonitoring

- Population-based estimates of human exposure to pesticides
  - Organophosphates
  - Pyrethroids
  - Herbicides
  - Organochlorines
- Discussion includes applications and limitations of biomarker methods

Current Areas of Research in Pesticide Toxicology: Endocrine Disruption

• Environmental chemicals that may mimic or antagonize the effects of endogenous hormones
  – Pharmaceutical example: diethylstilbestrol (DES) and vaginal cancer from synthetic estrogens
• Do pesticides have potential to interact with hormone receptors in humans?
  – Considerations of exposure, internal dose, and response
  – An area of ongoing research, and risk assessment considerations
  – EPA requires screening of pesticides for potential interactions with the endocrine system
Current Areas of Research: Cancer and Other Health Endpoints

• Health implications of chronic, low-level residential exposure to pesticides

• Epidemiological studies in high-risk occupations
  – Pesticide applicators
    • The Agricultural Health Study
    • http://aghealth.nci.nih.gov/

• Current and future studies focusing on children and environmental health
  – The National Children’s Study
  – http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov/Pages/default.aspx
Literature for Further Review


Literature for Further Review