



Pesticide Safety for Children

What are pesticides?

Pesticides are poisons that are designed to kill pests. They can hurt you if used improperly. There are many kinds of pesticides. They come in bottles, boxes, and bags.

What are pests?

Pests are something that can either hurt you, your pet, or plants in the house, yard, or garden. Pests can be insects (spiders, mosquitoes, bees, wasps, ticks, or fleas). Pests can be weeds in the yard or garden. Pests can be diseases that cause plants to lose leaves or die. Pests can also be animals like mice, rats, skunks, or armadillos. *BUT, not all pests need to be killed.* Only pests that harm you, your pet, or plants need pesticides.

Are all bugs bad?

No. Most bugs, insects, spiders, bees, wasps, and animals do not harm us or our plants. The only time a critter is considered bad is when it bites us like mosquitoes, bites our pets like ticks, or makes our plants sick like too many weeds or a plant disease.

Do pesticides hurt children?

Yes, a pesticide can make you sick. If it gets on your hands or feet, it can make them itch and turn red. If you breathe the smoke, dust, or spray it can make you feel sick. Sometimes people feel dizzy, shaky, tired, or get a bad headache if they touch or breathe a pesticide. **NEVER** put your fingers in your mouth when playing outside. Always wash your hands with soap and water.

Do pesticides hurt pets?

Yes, pesticides can hurt pets. If they sniff them, they could get sick. If they walk on pesticides, they could get sick. Sometimes they can make our pets die if they eat pesticides like mouse poison. Pets should be protected like you from pesticides.

What do pesticides look like?

Some pesticides look like colored water in plastic bottles. Some pesticides look like white or yellow dust in cans. Some pesticides look like gray or yellow dirt in bags. Some pesticides even look like candy in little bags.

How do I know if something is a pesticide?

If you do not know what something is....**DO NOT TOUCH IT.** Most pesticides have a bad smell. Pesticides should be stored up high or in a locked cabinet away from you at school, home, at your friend's house, and at your grandparent's house. If there is a spill or something smells bad, tell an adult. Keep your friends and family away from these poisons.

If they are so bad, then why do we have them?

Adults use pesticides when there are pests that either hurt us, our pets, or our plants. They should only be used when there is no other way to control the pests.

Farmers were the first people to use pesticides because they had big fields and many animals. Then people in the cities and towns began using them. They use pesticides too often and too much. These chemicals are also getting into the water we drink. Adults need to learn to use pesticides only if they *really* need them.

Where do pesticides come from?

Scientists make pesticides that are chemicals in laboratories.

What is a sprayer?

Sprayers are tools that adults use to apply pesticides. Never touch a sprayer. It might have a little pesticide in the tank or bottle.



Pesticide Safety Tips for Children

1. Tell your parents what you learned today. Ask them to make sure all poisons are out of your reach so you and your friends, brothers, and sisters do not get hurt.
2. If an adult has been working outside and is spraying something, follow their directions and do not play in that area until they say the area is safe.
3. Keep your fingers out of your mouth. Always wash your hands with soap and water.
4. Wear shoes if pesticides have been applied to the yard or flower beds.
5. Pull weeds in the lawn, flower beds, and garden by hand for adults.
6. Look for lady beetles, dragon flies, preying mantis, and spiders. These can be beneficial since they eat pests. When you see these critters, show them to your parents. ONLY touch them when an adult is around.
7. Help adults plant flowers that attract beneficial critters. You can help adults keep the plants healthy.
8. Prevent pest problems by cleaning up drinks when they spill. Pick up food when it falls on the floor or ground. Help clean up dishes after you eat. Pick up trash.

Review Questions

1. Name three insect pests.
2. Name three animal pests.
3. Describe a sick plant in your house or in the yard.
4. What makes "a good bug"?
5. Name three good bugs.
6. What is a pesticide?
9. How can you stay safe in the yard?
10. What do you do if you find something you are not sure what it is?



EXTENSION

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