

PESTICIDES

Pesticides are substances intended to destroy, control, or repel pests, such as insects (known as an insecticide), weeds (known as an herbicide), fungi (known as a fungicide), rodents, and bacteria. We are exposed to pesticides through inhalation, absorption from the skin, and ingestion. Several studies show a link between pesticides and cancers such as Ewing's sarcoma, leukemia, breast cancer, and lymphoma. There is also a link between women's reproductive problems, thyroid disease and neurological problems.

Symptoms of acute and chronic exposure:

Respiratory-irritation including asthma, pneumonitis, pulmonary edema, and cough

Eyes-irritation including tearing, burning, pain, and twitching

Skin-dermatitis, itching, rash, acne, blistering, eczema, and psoriasis

Nervous system-numbness, tingling, weakness, loss of balance, dizziness, and headache

Mental/emotional-depression, anxiety, brain fog, decrease memory and concentration

Endocrine-thyroid changes, hormonal irregularities, and reproductive conditions

Cardiac-arrhythmia, palpitations, pain, and tightness

Gastrointestinal-nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea

Other-Cancers

Examples of pesticides and some common sources:

DDT- an organochlorine insecticide. Linked to Breast cancer, infertility and miscarriage.

Round-Up- an organophosphate herbicide. Linked to Lymphoma.

Agent Orange- an herbicide which produces Dioxin as a by-product. Carcinogenic and reproductive problems.

Atrazine, Chlordane, Heptachlor, Malathion, Dieldrin, lindane, HCB- pesticides whose residues are found on food. Linked to adverse hormonal and neurological health effects.

Pesticide residues are found on conventional fruits and vegetables in the store.

The 10 with the highest residue:

Peaches
Apples
Sweet bell peppers
Celery
Nectarines
Strawberries
Cherries
Lettuce
Grapes-imported
Pears

The 10 with the lowest residue:

Onion
Avocado
Sweet corn-frozen
Pineapple
Mango
Sweet peas- frozen
Asparagus
Kiwi
Bananas
Cabbage

Check www.ewg.org for an updated list