

How Can I Minimize My Exposure to Pesticides?

10 Easy Steps To Take

- 1 To get rid of weeds in your lawn or garden, don't spray them — pull or dig them up, or leave them alone. Tolerate some weeds in your lawn — after all, they are green, like grass.
- 2 Keep your use of indoor pesticides — such as insect sprays and pest strips — to a minimum, eliminate them altogether, or use less toxic pesticides such as pyrethrins and boric acid.
- 3 If your workplace is sprayed with pesticides, find out whether your office or workspace can be spared this treatment. Often, there are no insects in office areas, especially if food is not stored or eaten there.
- 4 Try to avoid lawn fertilizers or treatments that contain pesticides. If you're not sure whether they contain pesticides, call the store where you bought them, or call the manufacturer (many stores are not familiar with all the pesticides and chemicals they sell).
- 5 If you hire a lawn care company, ask them not to use any pesticides. Even if you hire a “natural” lawn care company, check on all substances they plan to apply to your property. If the product kills weeds or insects, it's a pesticide.

Do Pesticides Cause Lymphoma?

- 6 If you live in an area where the local water supply is contaminated by farm runoff (this includes much of the Midwest, parts of California, and some other areas), consider drinking filtered or bottled water rather than city tap water or local well water. Be careful: not all filters effectively remove pesticides, and not all bottled water is free of chemical contamination. (Ask your dentist about possible fluoride needs, especially for children.)
- 7 Buy organically grown fruits and vegetables from a store you can trust. Look for the organic label. If you can't buy organic food, wash and/or peel fruits and vegetables. These fruits and vegetables are thought to have the highest pesticide residues: apples, grapes, green beans, peaches, pears, strawberries, spinach, and winter squash (squashes like butternut, acorn, spaghetti, pumpkin, golden). But continue eating lots of fruits and vegetables!
- 8 In animals and humans, pesticide residues concentrate in fat. If you do eat dairy products, use the low-fat kinds. (It is thought that young children may benefit from consuming some fat in their diet. Check with your pediatrician.)
- 9 Reduce your consumption of animal fat, which contains more pesticide residue than the muscle (meat) portions. Remove as much fat as possible from meat and poultry before cooking.
- 10 Don't eat fish caught in ponds, lakes, or rivers that are contaminated with runoff water from nearby farms.