Pesticides are substances used to control unwanted pests such as insects, weeds, fungi and rodents.

Who is most at risk?
- Fetuses
- Children
- Agricultural Workers and Their Families

How are we exposed?
- **Inhalation Exposure**: Pesticides that are sprayed into the air or that accumulate in dust can be breathed in.
- **Oral Exposure**: Pesticides contaminate food and water and are ingested.
- **Dermal Exposure**: Small amounts of pesticides may enter the body through skin.

What are the health risks?
- **Nervous System Effects**: Pesticides interfere with how brain cells signal and are linked to cognitive and behavior problems.
- **Hormonal System Effects**: Pesticides interfere with hormones in the body that control important functions like development and reproduction.
- **Cancer**: Laboratory experiments and studies of farm workers show that some pesticides have the potential to cause cancer.
- **Respiratory Effects**: Exposure to pesticides during pregnancy increases the risk of asthma and wheeze in children. Long term and high dose pesticide exposure can cause respiratory problems.
10 Tips to Reduce Your Pesticide Exposure Now

1. Practice organic lawn care.
2. Utilize integrated pest management (IPM) methods that eliminate or reduce the need for synthetic lawn and garden chemicals.
3. Aerate your lawn to allow for healthy root growth.
4. Choose native plants that thrive in your zone.
5. Grow your own organic produce.
6. Eliminate standing water that attracts mosquitoes.
7. Nourish soil with organic compost since nutrient-rich soil reduces pest infestations.
8. Leave shoes, strollers, and luggage at the door.
9. Encourage friends and neighbors to reduce the use of pesticides. Pesticides can cross property lines.
10. Wash hands after playing outdoors and before eating.

To take action in your community, remember to support legislation to restrict pesticide use in public spaces!

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