

## **Pesticides**

Welcome to the first category of products we will be tossing - pesticides!

In my personal and professional experience, I have found that pesticides are absolutely the most dangerous product that we have in our homes. Ironically, years ago, I was so ignorant of this fact even when I was using food as medicine and eating all organic food. I lived in Houston, the bug capital of Texas, and I was having an exterminator come every three months. It didn't work that well because I still needed to use Raid and other bug killers. Having an exterminator and using pesticides was the obvious answer. It's easy to think pesticides are safe or else why would they be allowed, right!

But sometimes it takes extreme circumstances to wake us up to the real truth! When my son was ten years old, he was severely injured by exposure to a mix of banned and legal pesticides. And guess what? Today two of those pesticides that were legal then, are now banned - Diazinon and Dursban.

Think about this - the words pesticide, biocide, fungicide, and mildewcide all end with the suffix cide. Cide means "to kill." These chemicals are designed to kill living organisms. The problem is we are alive, and the beneficial bacteria in our gut responsible for immune function are VERY sensitive to pesticides. It is so important to realize that when we are exposed whether in our homes, workplaces, or our food, even at low levels, pesticides impact our health in many ways - often without anyone making the connection. *We must understand the nature of pesticides, and when we do understand, we will be proactive, and use only safe alternatives!*

### **Why is removing pesticides so important?**

Since pesticides are the most dangerous products we store and use in our home, getting rid of them is an exciting opportunity and is so beneficial for everyone, including your pets!

You may be fortunate and live in a part of the country where there is less need for pesticides but the following information is important because we all go to public spaces and may run into exposures - I am going to talk about seven ways pesticides can affect our health

#### **1. Impaired respiratory system**

Low-dose, chronic exposure to pesticides can negatively impact the respiratory system.

- Studies show that over a lifetime, pesticide and herbicide exposures pose added risk for developing breathing disorders like asthma, COPD, emphysema, and bronchitis.

- It is estimated that one in 13 Americans have asthma and its the #1 chronic illness in children today. What I am saying is - Your child's need to use an inhaler may be related to the can of Raid or Hot Shot under your kitchen sink or EVEN the disinfectant you may keep in the bathroom! Yes, I mention disinfectants as many contain EPA registered pesticides as the killing agent.

## **2. Linked to cancer**

Pesticide exposure has been directly linked to cancer.

- For example, young children exposed to pesticides in the home are more likely to develop leukemia or lymphoma. Infants and toddlers that crawl on the floor are especially vulnerable.
- The herbicide Roundup is the go to weed killer for American lawns. It has been directly linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, yet it is still being sold. It's pretty crazy and ironic that we see advertisements promoting spraying Roundup on your beautiful lawn while at the same time on another station, we might be hearing about the Roundup class action lawsuit.

## **3. Linked to neurological conditions**

Pesticide exposure has been directly linked to neurological conditions.

- Studies show that the risk of having Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and suicide are significantly higher in districts with greater pesticide use.
- Glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup that we use on our lawns, is also the most widely used agricultural chemical in history and it has been implicated in neurological conditions. This chemical has been banned in Germany, Viet Nam, and many other countries. We need to follow suit.
- Here in the U.S., Pyrethroid/pyrethrum based pesticides are the most used in homes today. They are used extensively by exterminators as well as for mosquito control. Unfortunately, they are touted as non-toxic because they come from the chrysanthemum flower. They are found in many pest control products labeled safe, including the very popular NIX treatment for head lice. This means you apply the same pesticide being used to kill roaches, mosquitoes, etc. on your child's head. These pesticides are neurotoxic - they impact the brain! I worked with a mother who wanted me to help her figure out why her child had suddenly started having headaches. He had not had headaches before but he continued having chronic low grade headaches for months after the first headache. We were able to directly trace the onset of the headaches back to the application of NIX only after the mother treated her son again. Upon application, he had immediate excruciating head pain. She connected the dots from the first treatment! She was so upset as the teacher was telling the parents that NIX was the product to use. She became an activist determined to spread the word as her

son had been so miserable, missed out on a lot of activities he loved and they had spent money trying to figure out why he was having headaches.

- Another example: I had a client with neurological issues that had tossed the toxins. She had dramatic improvements, but her tremors were still present. After visiting her home, I found she had not removed herbicides, numerous pyrethroid based pesticides, and high VOC paints from her attached garage. After removing them, her tremors were gone in three weeks. So, don't forget, harmful chemicals stored in attached garages can impact the air quality of the home. In this case, removal was a big win!!!

#### **4. Endocrine & thyroid disruption**

Pesticides and herbicides can be endocrine and thyroid disruptors.

- About 105 pesticides have been directly linked to endocrine disruption including insecticides belonging to the pyrethroid family. I've had numerous clients that couldn't conceive, give birth to healthy babies after stopping extermination, removing pesticides and other toxic products from their home.
- We were able to link one woman's multiple miscarriages to high levels of pesticides in her water supply.
- Many clients with hormonal disruption completely normalize - no more cramps, no more PCOS, no more PMS, no more endometriosis, no more bowel issues associated with periods after tossing the toxins.

#### **5. Metabolic disruption & weight gain**

Pesticides are obesogens. These are chemicals that have been linked to weight gain, regardless of what you eat and how much you exercise.

- One of the best documented groups of chemicals with obesogenic properties are pesticides.
- Glyphosate, found in our non-organic foods, has been declared an obesogen. Many people have reported unexpected spontaneous weight loss after they toss pesticides from their diet and their homes.

#### **6. Reduced immunity**

Pesticide exposure reduces the body's immunity and makes us more vulnerable to infection.

- My son's experience opened my eyes to this. He came down with strep throat right after his big pesticide exposure. The emergency room doctor ascribed the symptoms he was having to strep throat.
- I have had numerous clients track pesticide use and the onset of illness. One woman called that kept coming down with flu-like symptoms every three months like clockwork. Upon questioning and investigation it was finally connected with

the quarterly extermination of her church on Friday. I recommended she skip church on extermination weeks and that solved the problem. Think of all the other people who don't feel well and don't know why after they have been to a recently treated area.

- Clients with herpes, lymes, epstein barr virus, etc. have discovered that their dormant viruses are activated with pesticide exposure.

## **7. Disrupted bowel flora**

Pesticides disrupt and kill healthy bowel flora just as taking antibiotics disrupt the bowel microbiome.

- Would you believe that glyphosate, the most used herbicide used on our food and the active ingredient in Roundup, was originally patented as an antibiotic? It has been shown to kill good bacteria and encourage bad bacteria to grow! Eating non-organic food gives us a continual dose of antibiotics to our gut, the seat of our immune systems.
- So, if you have heard that eating organic isn't important, my experience with my son, clients, and studies prove this wrong. One study had subjects eat a conventional diet for 6 days, followed by an organic diet for another 6 days. By testing urine samples before and after going organic, researchers found huge drops in pesticide levels. After 6 days on the all organic diet, overall pesticide amounts dropped 60.5% in both adults and children. The most noteworthy statistic was a 95% drop in malathion, which is a pesticide associated with brain damage in children.
- But it's not just exposure to pesticides in food that affects bowel function. Several of my clients with gut issues did not turn around until extermination treatments were stopped and the house was cleaned specifically to reduce pesticide levels. One lost bowel control right after an exterminator applied pesticides to her home - that helped her connect the dots. Another was hospitalized for gastric disturbance and bowel obstruction right after a pesticide was applied - that got her attention!.
- We know that it can be hard to connect the dots because not everyone experiences the same symptoms nor does everyone show signs of impact at the same time. For some it can be immediate and others it can be years later. Earlier I mentioned the child that started getting headaches after the application of NIX as a lice treatment. I worked with several other parents that initially ascribed their child's gastrointestinal symptoms, after applying NIX, to food poisoning. One was throwing up and in intense stomach pain for three days. The same symptoms repeated with even more severity after the next application of NIX. So in those cases, NIX was directly linked to gut disruption. We must wake up to what is happening. It is our responsibility to spread the word and take action once we know better so other people won't suffer!

## **Tossing Toxic Pesticides**

Now let's get these toxic pesticides out of your home!

To start, take a cardboard box and gather everything in this category. There is no reason to read labels because there is no reason to keep a pesticide. Check under sinks and in drawers, cabinets, closets, and don't forget your attached garage for the following:

Don't worry, this does not mean that you have to live with a bunch of bugs! We've got plenty of safe and effective alternatives in our resources section, some that work even better than toxic pesticides.

After you have gathered the pesticides, take the box out of the house and safely dispose of it when you are able. Take them to a hazardous waste site in your area, which can be found by typing your zip code into [earth911.com](http://earth911.com). Put the pesticides in your trunk when you take them so you are not exposed while driving. When you get home, open your trunk and let it air out for several hours in the sun, if weather permits.

If you have regularly scheduled pest control services, we recommend canceling or switching to a service that will incorporate non toxic integrated pest management. See our resources guide for more information. We also provide cleaning protocols for reducing pesticide residues that linger in your home from these treatments.

You should feel great about the work you've accomplished! Because by removing pesticides from your home, you've made a *huge* investment in your family's future health and wellbeing! AND We will be saying this over and over - again, it's up to us to take proactive charge of the health of our families! Remove pesticides from your home and eat organic as much as you can!

You won't regret it!