



Keep your pets safe when using pesticides

Many products we use on a regular basis contain pesticides, from swimming pool sanitizers to insect repellents, mothballs, and flea protection products for pets. Although all pesticides can pose some risk, the level of risk depends on how toxic the pesticide is, and how much exposure occurs.

Domestic pets share our environment, and cats and dogs in particular are closer to the ground and are prone to sniffing and tasting whatever may be in their environment.

In addition, pet owners may apply pesticide products directly to their pets to protect them from fleas and ticks. This is because fleas can cause:

- parasites (like tapeworms)
- diseases (like typhus)

Before using a pesticide

Ask yourself if the pest you want to control is harmful, and whether its numbers pose a real problem. Certain insects like lady beetles that feed on mites, and lacewings that eat aphids, can be beneficial.

Consider if there are physical control methods that might work to get rid of a pest problem. For example:

- reduce clutter
- seal areas where pests enter the building
- keep premises free of trash and overgrown vegetation
- redirect water away from a building or field to avoid standing water where [mosquitoes](#) could breed

Using pesticides

If not used, stored or disposed of properly, pesticides can harm you, your children and pets. If you choose to use pesticides, you are responsible for [using them safely](#).

When buying a pesticide:

- Choose only products that have been registered by Health Canada.
 - You can identify these products by the Pest Control Product (PCP) number on the label.
 - You can search the [Pesticide Label Database](#) to find the right product, from your computer or mobile phone.
- Make sure you buy a product that includes the name of the pest you are trying to control on the label.
- Only buy the amount of the product needed for the treatment.
- [Avoid buying pesticides over the Internet](#) because these pesticides may not contain the necessary precautions or instructions which could lead to accidental misuse or injury to you or your pet, and may not be approved for use in Canada.
- Never attempt to make your own [homemade pesticides](#) since this practice can result in risks to your health and the safety of others including pets, as well as the environment.



When using pesticides:

- Use a pesticide only for the purpose stated on the label. For example, never use a pesticide indoors when it is intended for outdoor use only.
- Only use the amount of the product needed for the treatment.
- Always read, understand and follow all the label directions and precautions.
- Never mix different pesticides together, unless the instructions tell you to do so.
- Store pesticides in their original container and out of sight and reach of pets.

Protecting pets from pesticides

To reduce pesticide exposure to pets:

- Remove pets, cages, pet toys, chew bones, food bowls and bedding from the area to be treated.
- Keep pets out of treated areas while pesticides are being applied, and until areas are dry.
 - Read the label to find out when it is safe to return to the treated area. If you are unsure of the recommended time, keep pets away from the area until the area is dry.
 - For indoor pesticide uses, ventilate your home before returning.
- Cover fish tanks. If you are using a fogger (bug bomb), turn off fish tank pumps during the application.
- Never remove mothballs from their original sachet or use them outside of sealed, airtight containers. Pets could mistake mothballs for food. Never use mothballs outdoors.
- Be careful what type of wood you burn in an outdoor fire pit or campfire since some types of [treated wood](#) can release harmful chemicals into the air when burned.

Pesticide baits

Pesticide baits are often prepared with food ingredients that can be attractive to pets. Place the baits in locations where your pet cannot reach them. Remember that pets often dig up baits that were buried.

Pets can also be poisoned by eating poisoned prey, which is called secondary poisoning. Consult a pest control professional for advice on a bait product with lower potential for secondary poisoning.

Lawn care pesticides

If you hire a pest control company or lawn service, talk to them about the products they are using and any precautions for your pets.

Granular lawn products may require keeping pets off the treated area for 24 hours or longer while the granules dissolve and the treated area dries. Check the label for specific instructions.

Flea and tick protection products

To protect your cat or dog from fleas and ticks:

- Learn how to inspect your pet for [fleas](#).
- Ask a veterinarian about the best treatment, which can depend on the type of animal, its age and whether it is pregnant.
- Use the right product for your pet (the label will state if it is for dogs or cats).



- For products that are applied directly to your pet's skin, learn how to safely apply these by watching this short [video](#).
- Watch your pet for signs of a bad reaction and see a veterinarian if you are concerned.
 - Signs of a bad reaction in your pet can include trembling, vomiting, and gastro-intestinal disturbances.

Pesticide spray drift

When pesticides are used normally and according to the label, [pesticide residues from spray drift](#) are not a concern for the people using them or for bystanders, including pets. If you have concerns, you can report incidents of spray drift to your provincial or territorial government.

If someone is spraying pesticides near your home, you may choose to take extra safety steps like:

- remove and/or cover outdoor toys and eating areas
- keep pets indoors
- close windows
- make sure people remove their shoes when they come indoors so they are not tracking in any pesticide residue
- wash any toys and food or water dishes that have come into contact with pesticides

If you intend to spray a pesticide on your property, it is a good practice to let your neighbours know so they can decide whether to take the same precautions.

In case of poisoning

If your pet is showing signs of pesticide poisoning contact a veterinarian.

When you call the veterinarian, you need to know the name of the product that your pet was exposed to or the amount of a product it may have eaten, your pet's symptoms, and the time of the incident.

Take the pesticide container or label with you to the veterinarian.

Report health or safety concerns

Report any adverse events to the manufacturer, who is required by law to report it to Health Canada. Contact information can be found on the product label. You may also report an incident for products with a Pest Control Product (PCP) number directly to Health Canada by completing an [incident report form](#).

For more information

For information on how to deal with common household pests like spiders, bedbugs, ants, cockroaches and mice, visit the [Pest Control Tips](#).

For more information on how to manage lawn weeds and pests, consult the [Healthy Lawns](#) series.

For specific tips on how to use pesticides indoors and outdoors around the home, you can consult the [Homeowner Guidelines for Using Pesticides](#).

For more information on how pesticides are registered in Canada, consult [The Regulation of Pesticides in Canada](#).



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