

Organophosphate Pesticides Fact Sheet

Organophosphate pesticides are used in commercial agriculture to control pests on fruit and vegetable crops. They are also used in home gardens, for flea control on pets, and in some no-pest strips. In the past, organophosphate pesticides were widely used inside homes to control pests like termites and ants, but these uses have been discontinued.

Organophosphate pesticides are found in

- Some flea and tick collars, shampoos, sprays, and powders for dogs and cats.
- Some garden pest control products and no-pest strips.
- Some fruits and vegetables. Small amounts of organophosphate pesticides found in these foods come from agricultural pesticide use.
- Air and dust in areas where organophosphate pesticides are used, such as some farms or home gardens.
- Some treatments for head lice.

Possible health concerns

Some organophosphate pesticides:

- May affect the nervous system.
- May harm the developing fetus, possibly affecting later learning and behavior.

Possible ways to reduce exposure

- Use pesticide-free methods for pest prevention in your home and garden. If you choose to use pesticides, consider baits and traps instead of sprays. Always follow directions for use, storage, and disposal.
- To help control fleas without pesticides, comb pets with a flea comb, regularly bathe pets with pesticide-free shampoo, and wash pet bedding.
- If a pesticide is needed for flea control, consider safer spot-on treatments or oral medications for your pet. Ask your veterinarian about the safest choices.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- Consider choosing organic or pesticide-free fruits and vegetables.
- Because pesticides can be in dust, wash your hands often, especially before eating or preparing food, clean your floors regularly, and use a damp cloth to dust.

For more information:

Tips for pest prevention: www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/factshts/pull2.pdf

Find local disposal site for pesticides: Visit <http://recyclenation.com/> and enter "Pesticides" and your zip code in the search box; or call 1-800-732-9254.