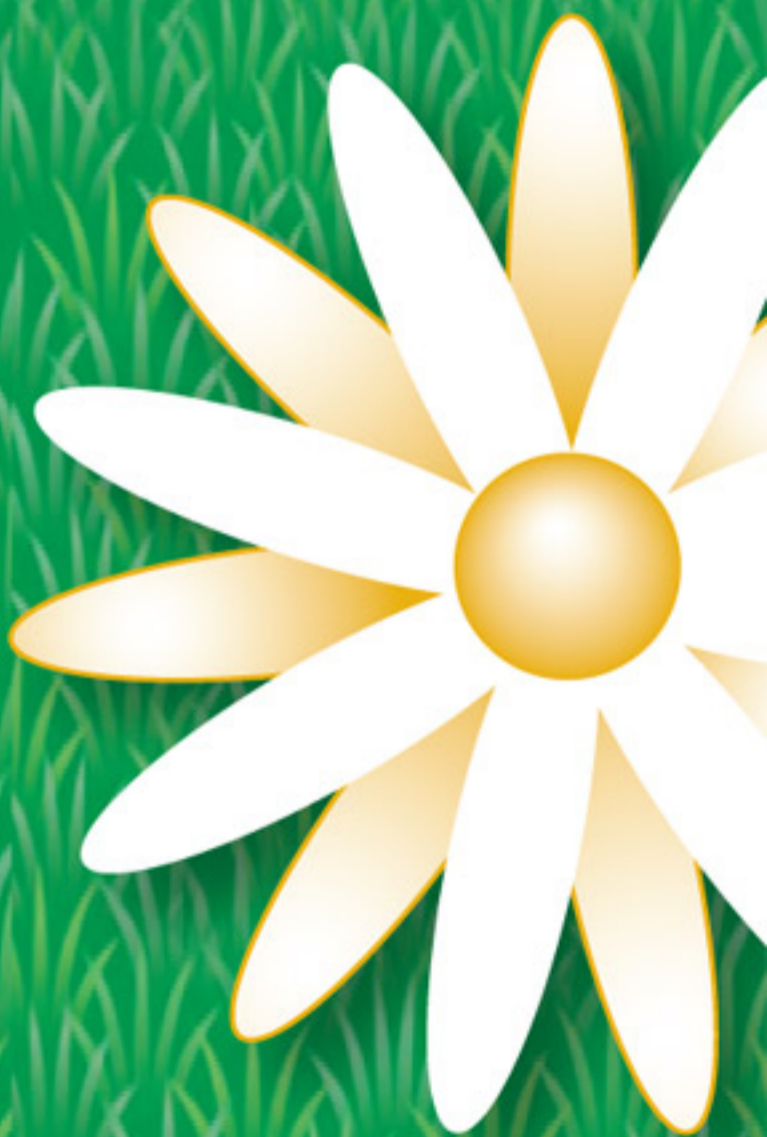




WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Pesticides & Your Health



**simcoe
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DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



PESTICIDES AND YOUR

Health

Pesticide use is controversial. Many people wonder if exposure to pesticides causes health problems, and if so, what are the risks?

IMPACTS ON HEALTH

The answers to these questions are complex. Studies about the impact of pesticides on human health are not consistent, nor are they conclusive. However, research has shown that pesticides that are used for agriculture, lawns and gardens are associated with:

- some cancers (especially leukemias & lymphomas)
- reproductive effects (including fertility problems and adverse pregnancy outcomes)
- neurological effects (such as Parkinson's disease)

Research continues to look into the effects of pesticides on human health, including the impact of exposure on the immune system and brain development.

IMPACTS ON CHILDREN

There is concern that exposure to pesticides can pose higher risks for children. This is due to their:

- greater hand-to-mouth contact with soil and house dust





- smaller size, which places their bodies and breathing closer to the ground where pesticides build up
- growing and developing bodies
- immature metabolic systems that cannot break down toxins as well as adults

“The best way to protect children is to reduce or eliminate as many known or suspected contaminants as possible from our air, water, soil, food and products.”

*Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health and Environment
www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca*

THE BOTTOM LINE

Since the long-term health effects of pesticide exposure are not fully known, it is best to avoid their use and to take precautions against being exposed to them.





PESTICIDES, FERTILIZERS AND OUR SHARED

Environment

We can all make changes to help improve our environment!

Did you know?

Commercial pesticides may get rid of pests, but they can also kill soil bacteria, worms, honeybees, birds and other species that are beneficial to the environment. This means that pesticide use can actually make your lawn and garden more vulnerable to diseases and other pests.

Commercial fertilizers can also cause environmental problems because:

- too much nitrogen (an ingredient in commercial fertilizers) can place plants at risk for environmental stresses and diseases.
- phosphorous (another ingredient in commercial fertilizers) can leach into rivers and lakes and promote algae growth, which blocks sunlight and prevents aquatic plants from growing.





MAINTAINING HEALTHY LAWNS AND GARDENS

Naturally

Natural lawn and garden care practices can help your grass, flowers and other vegetation thrive. Natural lawn and garden care methods include:

- Aerate lawn
- Mow grass 6-8 cm high
- Feed lawn with grass clippings
- Water grass deeply and infrequently
- Fertilize garden with compost
- Grow 'native' plants

By following these practices, you can eliminate the need for commercial fertilizers and pesticides. Many lawn care operators have 'natural' options available.



NATURAL LAWN AND GARDEN

Websites

- **Toronto Public Health**
www.toronto.ca/pesticides
- **Health Canada's Healthy Lawns Website**
www.healthylawns.net
- **Go for Green**
www.goforgreen.ca/gardening

Enjoy your healthy lawn and be patient... natural techniques take time!



For more information, call or click:



**simcoe
muskoka**
DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Your Health Connection

721-7520

1-877-721-7520

www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 6:00 pm



**WE SUPPORT
ACTIONS THAT**

- Increase the understanding of current health research findings related to pesticide use
- Eliminate the use of non-essential pesticides (cosmetic uses)
- Increase non-toxic methods of lawn and garden care
- Encourage the use of precautionary practices when faced with environmental health uncertainties.