

# healthy homes

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PESTS AND PESTICIDES TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH

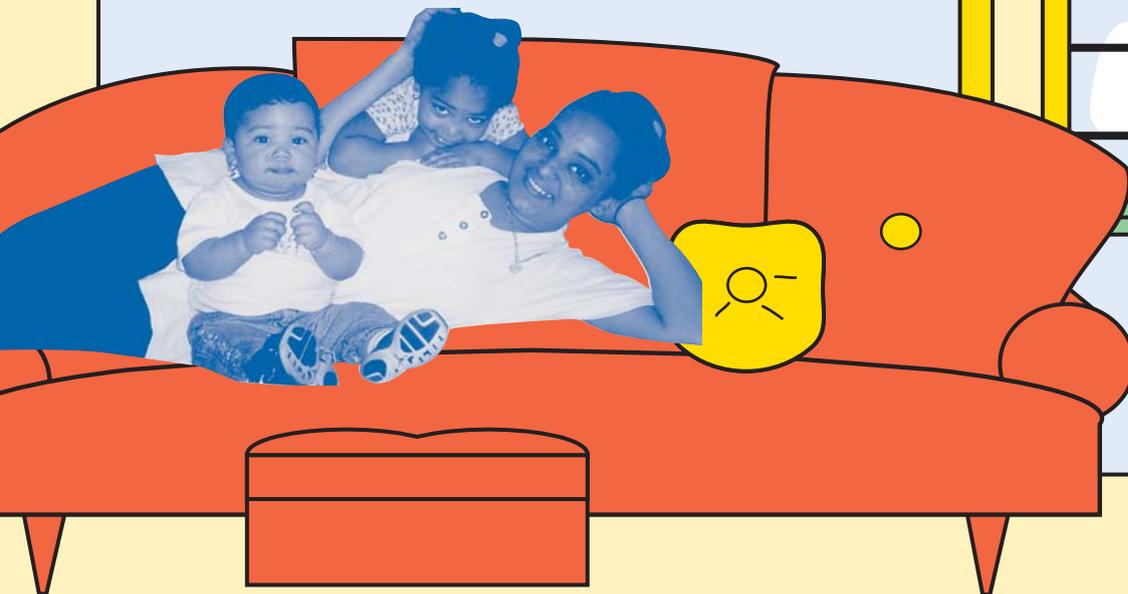
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**Pests or chemicals?** It's a hard choice. Mice and cockroaches can make your family sick, trigger asthma attacks, and damage walls and wiring. Using toxic chemicals to get rid of them can sicken adults and children, damage the environment, and even risk explosions.

Fortunately, there's an alternative. Working together, tenants, housing management and health officials can tackle the pest problem without resorting to illegal and dangerous chemicals.

## What are pesticides?

Pesticides are poisons used to kill pests (including cockroaches, mice and rats).



## SO HOW DO I FIGHT MICE AND INSECTS WITHOUT RISKING MY FAMILY'S HEALTH?

Pests need the same things humans do. They need food, water, shelter and a way to come and go. Integrated pest management (IPM) works by cutting off these basic needs.

### Shut down their food supply.

- Use covered trashcans and take out garbage daily
- Store food and pet food in closed containers
- Limit food to the kitchen and dining areas whenever possible
- Empty pet bowls between meals

### Cut off their source of water.

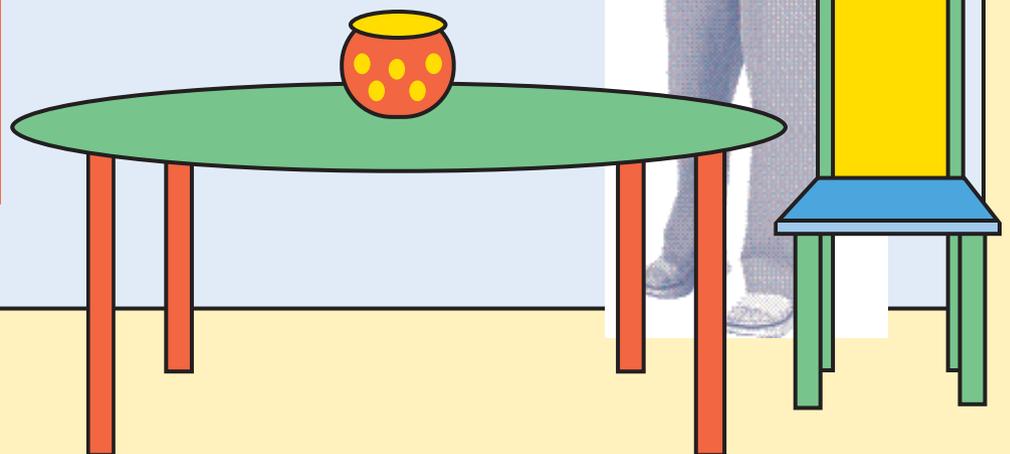
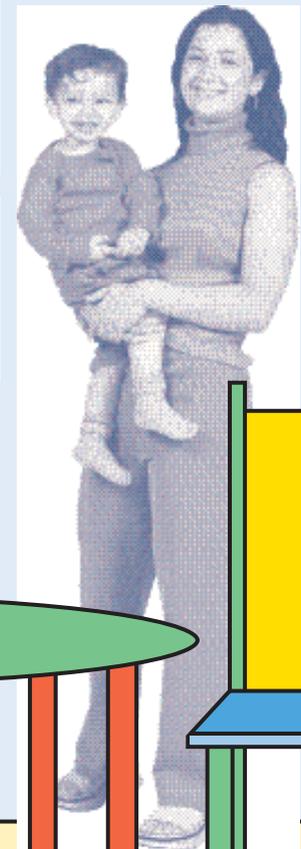
- Use caulk to seal leaks around sinks and showers
- Wipe up spills when they happen
- Inform housing management of leaks so they can be fixed

### Seal them out.

- Repair window screens
- Cover vents with wire mesh
- Repair cracks in baseboards and around pipes
- Block holes in walls and cabinets
- Clean up old newspapers, shopping bags, laundry and other clutter

### Erase their road maps.

- Erase their directions by washing their travel routes with soap and water



## **PESTICIDES ARE THE ONLY THING THAT SEEMS TO WORK. WHAT'S WRONG WITH USING THEM?**

Pesticides may seem to work in the short run, but in the long run, the mice and bugs just keep coming back. Integrated pest management works by pest-proofing your home.

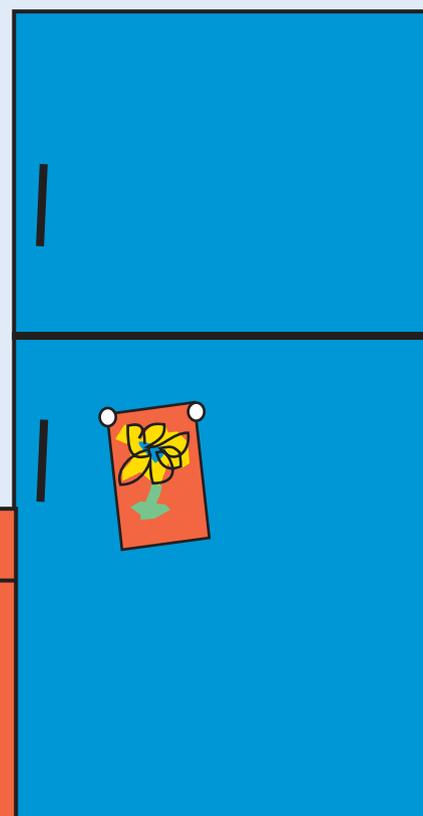
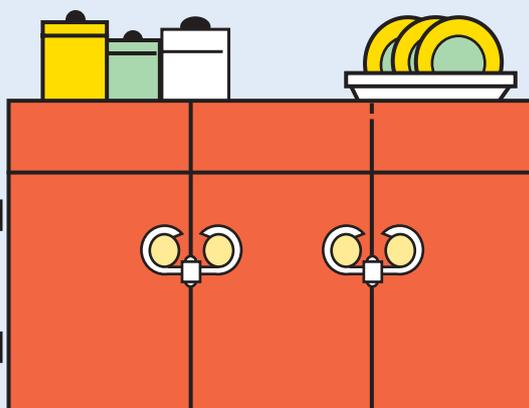
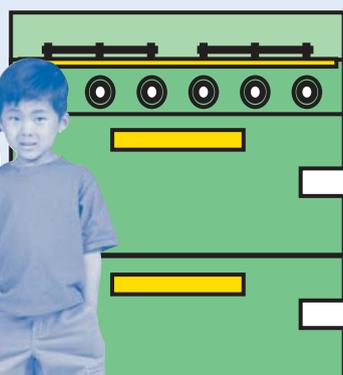
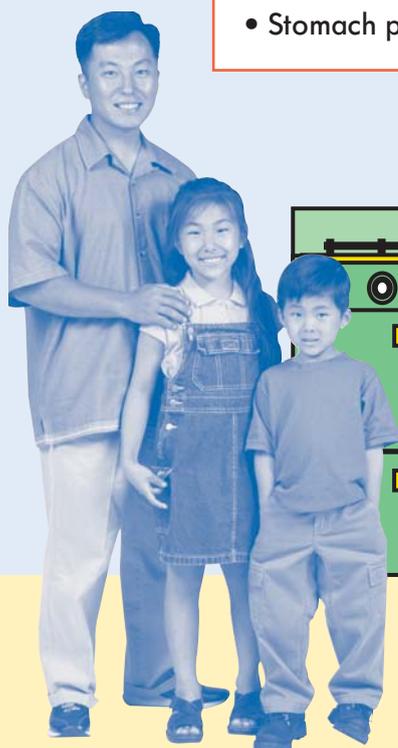
The same chemicals that kill insects and rodents are also dangerous for humans – especially children and elders. Sticky traps and gel baits are safer than liquid, powder and sprayed chemicals. Place them where pests travel or where you see droppings but where children and pets can't reach them.

### **Some symptoms of pesticide poisoning:**

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Headaches
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pains

### **How do these chemicals get into your body?**

- Breathed into lungs
- Absorbed through skin
- Dusts settle on food
- Eat or drink from unlabeled containers



## PEST CONTROL CONTRACTORS

Ask for a contractor who practices integrated pest management (IPM) and who is licensed and certified. They will use chemicals only when truly needed. To prepare for their visit:

- Empty closets and drawers, kitchen cupboards, and under sinks
- Move furniture away from walls so they can find where pests enter

### Expect a contractor to:

- Seal gaps that allow pests to enter
- Check every room of your home
- Check drawers, closets, cabinets
- Leave traps in likely pest areas
- Remove old traps and bait

## MORE DANGEROUS (AND LESS USEFUL) THAN YOU MAY THINK

Sometimes you will see unregistered or unlabeled pesticides being sold in local markets.

- “Tres Pasitos” contains a very dangerous poison (aldicarb) which is illegal for use in homes.
- “Tempo” contains a dangerous chemical (Cyfluthrin). There are different strengths of Tempo. ALL should be applied by a trained Pest Professional. Some are not for use in the home.
- “Miracle Chalk” or “Chinese Chalk” looks like blackboard chalk and is sometimes described as being safe for children and pets. **It is not.** It contains a hazardous pesticide. Because it looks like regular chalk, children may be poisoned by playing with it.
- Foggers can cause explosions and the mist is difficult to avoid. The chemicals in foggers can settle on traps and baits and change them so they are no longer effective.

## Safety rules for using any chemical

Never use products without labels and instructions

Follow label instructions carefully

Buy ready-to-use products, not concentrates

Buy only as much as you will use

Never mix pesticides

Never store pesticides in unlabeled containers, especially food or beverage containers

Lock up pesticides, out of reach of children

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