



Understanding Pesticide Risks



The risk of a pesticide depends on two things, exposure (**how much?**) and toxicity (**how poisonous?**). The **exposure** is the amount you get in or on your body, or the amount that is released into the environment. The **toxicity** of a pesticide is measure of how poisonous it is to people or the environment.

Pesticides often contain more than one **ingredient**, and each one may have a different toxicity. One easy way to estimate the toxicity of a pesticide product is to look at the **signal word**. Most pesticides will have either the word CAUTION, WARNING, or DANGER on the **label**, and that signal word reflects the toxicity of the product:

CAUTION represents the lower toxicity products

WARNING indicates medium toxicity products

DANGER stands for the highest toxicity products

Reporting a Human Exposure or Illness

1. If you need **medical attention right now**, call the **Poison Control Center** at **1-800-222-1222**.
2. Call the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) at **1-800-858-7378** to report the pesticide exposures or illnesses. NPIC provides these reports to the EPA under a cooperative agreement. NPIC is open from 7:30am - 3:30pm PST.
3. If the report involves an exposure at work, call Region 8 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at 720-264-6550 to report the occupational exposure.