

Dangers of Malathion, Lindane & Pyrethroids (+ head lice lotion)

From: [Sheri Nakken](#)

Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2005.

Malathion is an organophosphate poison - HIGHLY toxic and implicated in the death of cause from so-called mad cow disease and more Organophosphate poisoning is real

Malathion is a derivative of nerve gas

Lindane is an organophosphate also used in head lice solutions

<http://www.headlice.org/news/2004/pr020904.htm>

New York Follows California to Ban Prescription Pesticide Lindane for Lice and Scabies NY State proposes legislation banning the sale, use, and prescription of lindane. Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg introduces bill that would prohibit any lice or scabies treatment product from containing the pesticide Lindane.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/infoteam/pressrel/1997/19971223000515.html

Friends of the Earth: Press Release

www.licesolution.com/pesticides.html

FDA Action Shows Grave Dangers Of Lindane Lice Treatment

www.headlice.org/news/2003/dangerous.htm

News - Head-lice shampoos can be dangerous

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/health-fitness/diseases-conditions/head-lice-antidotes-903-lice-head-lice.htm>

The makers of Ovide, which has been available in the U.S. since 1999, have moved to take over lindane's market share. Ovide's active ingredient is malathion, an insecticide whose use for mosquito control has alarmed parents across the U.S.

Though it's one of the safer organophosphate insecticides--considerably safer than lindane--malathion works by interfering with chemical reactions in the nervous system, whether of an insect or a person. In its raw state, malathion readily soaks through the skin. So far, the makers of Ovide have not done studies to determine how much of the malathion gets into a child's circulatory system.

<http://www.getipm.com/articles/malathion-headlice.htm>

Woman poisoned by malathion head lice treatment

http://www.panna.org/resources/gpc/gpc_200104.11.1.21.dv.html

News Note: Woman Numb After Headlice Treatment

A year after a school principal in the U.K. used an insecticide treatment for headlice, her torso and arms are still numb. Doctors cannot explain her mysterious symptoms. She is urging parents to use non-chemical methods of headlice control on children.

<http://www.headlice.org/news/2001/pan-uk.htm>

New concerns over head lice treatment

http://www.checnet.org/healthhouse/chemicals/chemicals-detail.asp?Main_ID=198

OTHER lice sprays - <http://www.headlice.org/news/2003/notosprays.htm>
pyrethroid known as permethrin - NOT safe either

<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/infoservices/pesticidefactsheets/toxic/pyrethroid.htm>

Pyrethroids/ Pyrethrins Beyond Pesticides Rating: Toxic

Chemically engineered to be more toxic with longer breakdown times, and are often formulated with synergists, increasing potency and compromising the human body's ability to detoxify the pesticide.

<http://www.nospray.org/flyers/>

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Pyrethroid pesticides are health hazards

Scientific studies of sumithrin, resmethrin reveal serious safety concerns

For three years, government officials soothingly told us that malathion, sumithrin (Anvil), resmethrin (Scourge) and other pesticides used in repeated rounds of mass spraying are harmless. But almost every product brought to us by the highly profitable chemical industry is said to be harmless until, the hard way, we frequently find out otherwise. During the 1960s, even deadly DDT was said to be harmless!

This is not to say that every human-made product is dangerous. Raising unnecessary alarms should not be the goal of any environmental organization. But neither should we blindly accept assurances that every chemical put to wide use is safe. Government officials blandly assure us these pesticides are safe (while telling us to hide indoors!) and the newspapers, radio and television seek to incite hysteria without finding the space or time to report pertinent facts.

The health effects of these pesticides have been studied in sufficient detail to draw the conclusion that they are not safe. Worse, what research has been conducted on them raises serious concerns. A thorough investigation into the pesticides being used in New York aerial and ground pesticide-spraying programs can result in only one conclusion they cause serious harm to human, animal and marine health.

People naively assume that pesticides undergo lengthy testing by the government before being cleared for use. But that is not so. Instead the government accepts the minimal testing done by the manufacturers themselves until sufficient evidence of injury accumulates.

Another common misconception: Pesticides such as sumithrin are not natural and are not made from chrysanthemum flowers as is often claimed. Sumithrin, resmethrin and permethrin belong to a class of pesticides known as pyrethroids, which are synthetic analogs of chrysanthemums (Anvil) and dandelions (Scourge). Pyrethroids are not natural! These pesticides are often promoted as "safer" than malathion, an unrelated organophosphate, but this is not true.

Pyrethroids are toxic to the thyroid and immune system, among other

concerns. No safe exposure level has been scientifically established for avoiding hormonal and other adverse effects, nor has the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) set an exposure limit. Sumithrin/Anvil could lead to breast cancer

The link between sumithrin and breast cancer is not proven -much more research is needed in this area. But a study conducted by a scientist at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine is troubling. This study, published in the peer-reviewed Environmental Health Perspectives [Vol. 107, No. 3, March 1999], concludes "These findings suggest that pyrethroids should be considered to be hormone disruptors, and their potential to affect endocrine function in humans and wildlife should be investigated." This study indicates pyrethroids disrupt the endocrine system by mimicking the effects of the female hormone estrogen. This in turn can cause breast cancer in women and lowered sperm counts in men. When estrogen levels are elevated, old cells are not removed from the body and cell proliferation occurs, whether benign or malignant.

The Roger Williams General Hospital, Brown University in Providence, R.I., conducted a study on pyrethroids, which concluded: "chronic exposure of humans or animals to pesticides containing these compounds may result in disturbances in endocrine effects." [Steroid Biochem, March 1990; 35(3-4):409-14.]

A report issued in June 2000 by the Royal Society in England and written by a group from Cambridge University called for international cooperation to deal with the dangers posed by endocrine-disrupting chemicals, including pyrethroids, and recommends reducing human exposure to these chemicals. Due to concern in this area, Health Canada is currently conducting a retrospective **study of around 2,000 Ontario farm families** related to the risk of various reproductive outcomes, such as time to pregnancy, spontaneous abortion and pre-term delivery.

Other health dangers of Sumithrin

There are several other health concerns associated with sumithrin, and still more health concerns with other chemicals used with sumithrin in the product known as Anvil. Don't take our word for it -- the United States government and the manufacturer of Anvil give plenty of evidence of these dangers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency lists sumithrin as a suspected gastrointestinal or liver toxicant. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances lists sumithrin as a suspected kidney toxicant and suspected neurotoxicant.

Sumithrin is on the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) list. The TRI listing requires manufacturers to report the release of sumithrin. TRI-listed chemicals require such information due to their exceptionally hazardous status under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.

The International Chemical Safety Card, produced by the International Programme on Chemical Safety and the Commission of the European Communities, writes about sumithrin: "prevent generation of mists. This substance may be hazardous to the environment; special attention should be given to fish." It also states that no tolerable levels have been established for this substance. [This report is available from <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcsneng/neng0313.html>, the Centers for Disease Control's web site.]

There are many effects that can result from exposure to sumithrin. Inhaling can cause

coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, runny or stuffy nose, chest pain or difficulty breathing, as well as delayed long-term neurotoxic effects, including optic and peripheral neuropathy. Skin contact can cause rashes, itching or blisters. Young children, seniors and people with asthma are the most at risk from sumithrin exposure. The Pesticide Management Education Program at Cornell University reports:

"Asthmatic wheezing may be precipitated by exposure of predisposed individuals." Additionally, according to the second edition of the book "The Best Control" by Steve Tvedten, people with multiple sclerosis are in danger because they may be on medication that affects sodium and potassium ion diffusion through neuron axons.

Sumithrin is highly toxic to bees and fish. The label on Anvil, the brand of sumithrin used, states "This product is toxic to fish. For terrestrial uses, do not apply directly to water, or to areas where surface water is present or to intertidal areas below the mean high water mark." It can also remain in the environment -- the half-life (the length of time for 50 percent of a substance to disintegrate or to decay into another substance) of sumithrin in soil has been calculated to be as long as 16 weeks (although it can be less than this).

Health problems with other chemicals in Anvil

The full name of the sumithrin product being used in the mass-spraying operations is Anvil 10 + 10 ULV. It has this name because the product is comprised of 10% sumithrin and 10% piperonyl butoxide (PBO). PBO is itself a hazardous chemical. These are the two "active" ingredients. The remaining 80% consists of white mineral oil and polyethylbenzene.

PBO is added to make the sumithrin more effective. It acts by inhibiting naturally occurring enzymes that would otherwise degrade the insecticide. PBO breaks through the insect's defense, making the insecticide more powerful.

PBO is suspected of being a carcinogen by the EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs. It is also listed as a suspected gastrointestinal or liver toxicant, and a suspected neurotoxicant, by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances. And it was reported as a suspected reproductive toxicant by J. Jankovic in "A Screening Method for Occupational Reproductive Health Risk," published in American Industrial Hygiene Association Journal. [57: 641-649. 1996.] Another test that indicates that PBO may be carcinogenic is reported by a California environmental products company, Safe2Use, which cited a study by Environmental Chemistry Inc., a Texas environmental laboratory that primarily serves the chemical industry.

Piperonyl butoxide is ranked more hazardous than most chemicals in two out of three ranking systems, and is also on the federal government's TRI list. Both piperonyl butoxide and sumithrin are dangerous chemicals of and by themselves. Put them together and the dangers exponentiate far more than the sum of the individual parts. This is known as a "synergistic effect." Synergistic effects have barely begun to be studied.

Polyethylbenzene (PEB), also known as heavy aromatic **solvent naphtha (petroleum)**, is widely used in pesticides. PEB is listed on the EPA Office of Pesticide Programs' Inert Pesticide Ingredients List No 2, which is a list of 64 substances the EPA "believes are potentially toxic and should be assessed for effects of concern. Many of these inert ingredients are structurally similar to chemicals known to be toxic; some have data suggesting a basis for concern about the toxicity of chemical." PEB is related to **ethylbenzene**, which is listed as a suspected reproductive toxicant and a suspected respiratory toxicant by the EPA.

The white mineral oil, also known as **hydrotreated light paraffinic petroleum distillate**, is also listed on the EPA's Inert Pesticide

Ingredients List No 2 of potentially toxic chemicals.

According to Cornell's Pesticide Management Education Program, hydrocarbons used as solvents in spray products are likely to result in coughing, fever and chest pain (hydrocarbon pneumonitis) if these liquid mists are breathed in.

The 80% of Anvil that is not sumithrin or PBO are referred to as "inert" ingredients, a common labeling technique. **But the term "inert" can be misleading;** the EPA's Pesticide Regulation Notice 97-6 actually encourages manufacturers to voluntarily refrain from the use of the word "inert," preferring "other ingredients," due to consumers incorrectly assuming inert means "safe."

Resmethrin/Scourge a developmental toxicant

Resmethrin is listed as a developmental toxicant on California's Proposition 65 list, which catalogs chemicals known for reproductive toxicity. According to Environmental Defense's <scorecard.org> service, a chemical makes this list "if an independent science advisory board has concluded they possess sufficient evidence of such toxicity in animals or humans, or if an authoritative organization such as the National Toxicology Program have reached a similar conclusion, or if a federal regulatory agency requires a reproductive toxicity warning label."

Resmethrin is also listed by the EPA as a suspected gastrointestinal or liver toxicant.

Even the Centers for Disease Control says resmethrin "may be hazardous to the environment; special attention should be given to fish and honey bees." The CDC acknowledges the pesticide has short-term effects of irritating the eyes and the skin, while it does not know what the long-term effects might be. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcs/ipcs0324.html>

The International Programme on Chemical Safety says that some liquid formulations of resmethrin are "highly flammable" and/or explosive. The IPCS is a joint activity of the United Nations Environment Program, the International Labor Office and the World Health Organization.

The brand of resmethrin being used for spraying in the New York area is Scourge. The formulation of Scourge includes piperonyl butoxide. Multiple dangers associated with malathion

The organophosphate malathion **a derivative of nerve gas** received most of the attention in late 1999, when the City of New York launched a massive aerial spraying of it. Malathion is rightly regarded as a hazardous substance. The City of New York's Chem-Bio Handbook says that exposure to malathion can cause "headache, nausea, vomiting, cramps, weakness, blurred vision, pin-point pupils, tightness in chest, labored breathing, nervousness, sweating, watering eyes, drooling or frothing of the mouth and nose, muscle spasms and coma."

The handbook goes on to say that "other acute effects can include mental confusion, frequent urination, stomach cramps, diarrhea and seizures. Chronic effects of malathion exposure include delayed neurological effects including pain, numbness and weakness in the extremities, which may persist for months or years. Also, central nervous system damage (memory, mood, motor coordination, etc.)."

Malathion is a suspected toxicant in these areas: cardiovascular or blood, endocrine, gastrointestinal or liver, neurologic, respiratory, and skin or sense organ by various governmental agencies. It is also reported to be among the top 10% of chemicals in terms of hazards to the ecosystem, by Environmental Defense, a nonprofit conservation group.

The International Chemical Safety Card gives this blunt warning about malathion: "Prevent generation of mists! Strict hygiene. Avoid exposure of adolescents and children!" But young people, and others, were repeatedly exposed to large doses of the pesticide in late 1999. The Safety Card goes on to say that short-term health effects of malathion exposure "may cause effects on the nervous system, resulting in convulsions, respiratory failure."

Humans are not the only beings in danger from malathion. The manufacturer's label says it is "toxic to fish, aquatic invertebrates and aquatic life stages of amphibians ... This product is highly toxic to bees exposed to direct treatment." During the late 1999 spraying, more than 2,000 fish were killed in a Staten Island lake, a mass dying that the New York state Department of Environmental Conservation admitted was due to malathion.

Staten Island residents also reported that bees had disappeared from areas where they were normally present in large numbers. It is also feared that significant damage was done to monarch butterflies, which were migrating through the New York area during the fall 1999 spraying. ?

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The No Spray Coalition is the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit filed in Federal Court against the City of New York seeking a permanent halt to mass pesticide spraying. We are in serious need of funds to support the lawsuit and the organizing work we are doing. Please make a donation and mail to the address above. For more information, email us at: mitchelcohen@mindspring.com.

<http://www.newsinferno.com/storypages/11-20-2005-001.html>

Whistleblower Raises Serious Concerns Over Teflon-Related DuPont Chemical Used to Coat Billions of Food Containers

Date Published: November 20, 2005

By Steven DiJoseph

Acetaminophen forms toxics during wastewater chlorination
Disinfection of wastewater can lead to the formation of unwelcome byproducts from pharmaceuticals.

http://pubs.acs.org/subscribe/journals/esthag-w/2005/nov/science/as_acetaminophen.html

Acetaminophen, the most widely used painkiller in the world and the active ingredient in over-the-counter drugs like **Tylenol**, may be transformed into toxic compounds during chlorination in wastewater treatment plants, according to research posted today.

Reprinted from:

<http://www.wri.org/wri/wr-98-99/pestrisk.htm>

Pesticides and the Immune System: The Public Health Risks

Health concerns about pesticides have tended to focus on their potential to act as acute

poisons or their ability to cause cancer. But pesticides may pose other important risks as well. Recently, evidence has accumulated that many commonly used pesticides can suppress the normal response of the human immune system to invading viruses, bacteria, parasites, and tumors. The immune system is the body's primary line of defense against disease agents, so weakening its response could increase the toll of disease.

Laboratory studies show that a variety of organochlorine, organophosphate, carbamate, and metal-based pesticides (such as those based on arsenic, copper, or mercury) can suppress the immune system of mammals. Because substances toxic to other mammals are usually toxic to humans (since human immune systems are structured similarly to mammals), these laboratory studies indicate the kinds of immunosuppression humans may also experience.

Such tests provide an abundance of evidence. For example, exposure to the organochlorines aldrin and dieldrin reduces mouse resistance to viral infection, while DDT decreases antibody production in mammal and bird species. The organophosphate parathion delays antibody production and suppresses T-cell response in cell cultures, while chronic low-dose exposures of the commonly used organophosphate malathion can depress several different immune responses. Many solvents, inert ingredients, and contaminants that are part of pesticide formulations can also suppress immune responses in laboratory tests.

Epidemiological evidence, though limited, also indicates that pesticides can be toxic to the human immune system. Among Indian factory workers chronically exposed to several pesticides, blood lymphocyte levels one element of immune system health decreased by as much as two thirds from baseline levels and returned to normal only after pesticide exposure ceased.

Epidemiologists in the former Soviet Union have long observed that T-cell counts and functions are suppressed after pesticide exposure. For example, residents of agricultural districts in southern Russia where pesticide use was substantial had lower T-cell counts than control groups in the general population, and the former group also had higher rates of infectious diseases.

Likewise, in Moldova also part of the former Soviet Union teenagers in villages where pesticide application levels were greatest exhibited rates of infections of the respiratory and digestive tracts several times higher than teenagers from areas of lower pesticide use. From the 1960s through the 1980s, per hectare pesticide application rates in farming regions in central and southern Moldova were almost 20 times the world average.

Immune suppression from pesticide exposure may also play a role in the development of some cancers. As a group, farmers face higher risks than the general population for contracting Hodgkin's disease, melanoma, multiple myeloma, and leukemia all of which are cancers of the immune system.

Unfortunately, despite current evidence, the study of the immune suppressive potential for most pesticides is still in its infancy, and little work has been done to clarify the relationship between dose and effect. Thus, consensus has not been reached on how much pesticide exposure is required to compromise the immune system enough to affect health, or what kinds of immune-suppressing effects chronic low-dose exposures might cause in the public at large. Nonetheless, it is clear that the potential risk to public health, especially in agricultural communities where exposure is widespread, is significant.

As with other pesticide health risks, the dangers of immune suppression from pesticide exposure may be greatest in parts of the developing world and in countries of the former Soviet Union, where much larger fractions of the populace still live in the countryside and work on farms. In these developing regions, pesticide use is growing rapidly, yet pesticide

regulations and handling practices are often grossly inadequate.

To make matters worse, living conditions for many people in the developing world put them at especially high risk for immune suppression. Their immune responses are already weakened by widespread malnutrition; at the same time, contaminated water supplies, lack of sanitation, and poor housing conditions expose them to more disease agents. The result is particularly high fatality rates due to common diseases measles and whooping cough, for example diseases from which most patients in wealthy countries recover.

Adding pesticide-induced immune suppression on top of these other risks may substantially increase the burden of common diseases. The consequences could remain undetected because people would not necessarily die of acute pesticide poisoning; rather, deaths would be attributed to such diseases as pneumonia, or gastroenteritis, or to complications of measles. The fact that pesticide exposure weakened their immune responses and increased their vulnerability to illness or death would remain unrecognized.

Adapted from: Robert Repetto and Sanjay Baliga, Pesticides and the Immune System: The Public Health Risks (World Resources Institute, Washington, D.C., 1996).

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<http://www.nccn.net/~wwithin/vaccine.htm>

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