



## Healthy Beginnings Tips KEEP PESTS OUT



The pests in your house need food, water and a place to live in order to stay alive. By making it harder for pests to find these things, you can keep pests out of your home. You will also decrease your need to use pesticides. Pesticides can be harmful to people and their pets. They are especially harmful to children and pregnant women. Pesticides have been linked with cancer, neurological disorders like Parkinson's Disease, birth defects, and neuro-developmental problems that can cause difficulties in learning.

Follow these tips for a safer, healthier pesticide-free home:



- Don't over-water plants. Pests will use water left in plant containers.
- Store mops, sponges, washrags, and other cleaning utensils so that they can dry.



Dry



Dry

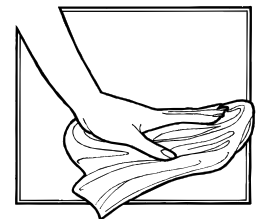
- Empty your refrigerator drain pan regularly. This is most important in summer.
- Rinse and dry containers before you recycle them.
- Stored newspapers or shopping bags are a perfect home for pests. Store them away from food. Don't store too many.
- Avoid clutter. If surfaces are clear, pests can't hide.
- Use screens on all windows and doors. Screens keep pests outside.



- Take out the trash. Pests love to eat food left in the trash.



- Keep your house clean. Pests eat crumbs from the floor or table. Clean tables and counters after every meal.



- Don't let food sit out. When food is left out, pests learn how to find it. Clean spills and dishes quickly.



- Pests are most active at night. Don't leave food out overnight.



**Avoid using pesticides routinely or to simply improve the look of your lawn or garden. Many 'weed and feed' products contain both fertilizer and pesticide chemicals. Pesticides are not good for people or pets. Pesticides should only be used when absolutely necessary and only after you have tried safer alternatives.**

- **If you must use a pesticide, choose baits and traps over sprays.**

The chemicals contained in baits and traps, while dangerous, stay in one place. Sprays, powders, foggers and bombs are more difficult to control, and should not be used in areas occupied by children, pregnant women, or pets. Place baits out of the reach of children and pets.

- **Store and dispose of pesticides properly.**

Keep out of the reach of children. If you must dispose of pesticides, make sure you do so at a household hazardous waste collection or as directed by your town transfer station. NEVER put pesticides down the drain or down a storm drain.

- **Read pesticide labels and carefully follow all directions.**

- **Use the least hazardous product possible.**

Look for signal words: "Danger" and "Poison" are the most dangerous; "Caution" and "Warning" are less so.

- **Pay attention to pesticide flags on lawns.**

Keep your children and pets away from any lawns which display this flag.

- **When talking to pesticide applicators, landscapers, building supervisors/landlords about pesticides, ask about organic or IPM (Integrative Pest Management) options.**

- **Hire only licensed professionals for chemical pesticide applications.**



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