

[Skip to main content](#)



Cornell University

New Program Learning Resources Events Maps & Stats Research Resources BCERF Research

Program on
Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors

SPRECHER
INSTITUTE
for Comparative
Cancer Research

Turf Pesticides and Cancer Risk Database

Frequently Asked Questions

■ Question

Are my pets at risk from lawn care pesticides?

■ Answer

Dogs, cats, and other companion animals often come into close contact with grass and, potentially, lawn care pesticides. Animals can be exposed through the air, through their paws and skin, and also by licking and eating.

Some lawn care pesticides pose a potential cancer risk to people and pets while others don't. For many chemicals, scientists do not yet have adequate data to know for sure. (To find out the cancer risk of many lawn care pesticides, go to: <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/turf/>.)

To reduce risk to you and your pets:

- Read the pesticide product label and follow all instructions exactly.
- Pay attention to label warnings for people and pets. After being applied, many pesticides will break down by sun, air or water, with time. Reduce exposures by waiting the appropriate amount of time (according to the label) before allowing your family or pets back into a treated area.
- If you use a professional lawn care service, do not hesitate to ask to read the label of the pesticide product being applied.
- Pay attention to small flags posted around turf and lawn areas in your neighborhood, local park, and other grassy areas. These flags often indicate a recent application of pesticides and that people or pets should stay away until flags are removed.

Alternatively, look for other ways to control and prevent pest infestations in your home and yard and use chemical pesticides only as a last resort or not at all. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods provide a variety of chemical-free solutions. For more information, go to: <http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/> or <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/>.

Answered by: [Heather Clark](#)

Last Reviewed: 02.15.07

[Return to topic list](#)

© 2009 Cornell University

Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors



Cornell University, College of Veterinary Medicine
Vet Box 31, Ithaca, NY 14853-6401
Phone: 607.254.2893; Fax: 607.254.4730
Email: breastcancer@cornell.edu



We comply with the [HONcode standard for trustworthy health](#) information: [Verify here](#).