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## **PESTICIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM FACT SHEET**

PEP-FS-4-97 Prepared by **M.A. Ferrell**, Extension Pesticide Coordinator

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# ***FIRST AID FOR PESTICIDE POISONING***

√ Many accidental pesticide deaths are caused by eating or drinking the chemical. Some applicators die or are injured when they breathe pesticide vapors or get pesticides on their skin. Repeated exposure to small amounts of some pesticides can cause sudden, severe illness. All pesticide handlers should know and thoroughly understand first aid treatment for pesticide poisoning.

### **1. First Aid for Pesticide Poisoning**

If you are alone with the victim:

- See that the victim is breathing; if not, give artificial respiration. To avoid self-contamination, wipe the mouth of the victim **BEFORE** giving artificial respiration.
- Decontaminate the victim by flushing with water immediately. Speed is essential!
- Call your doctor.
- **Call the Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222 (all areas, toll-free).**

· **Hospital Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

· **Doctor's Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

### **2. *Do not substitute first-aid for professional treatment!***

If two or more people are with the victim, speed is essential! One person should begin first-aid treatment while the other calls a physician.

### **3. General:**

- If breathing has stopped or is labored, artificial respiration must be given, preferably by someone certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Stop exposure to the poison. If the poison is on the skin, cleanse the person thoroughly.
- Save the pesticide container; get a readable label or name of the chemical or chemicals.

### **4. Specific:**

#### **Poison on Skin**

- Drench skin and clothing with water (shower, hose, faucet). A powder formulation can be brushed off, followed by washing.
- Remove clothing. Remove shoes first for easy trouser removal. Shoes will trap chemicals and be

absorbed into the skin.

- Cleanse skin and hair thoroughly with soap and water.

### **Poison in Eyes**

- Hold eyelid(s) open, wash eyes immediately with gentle stream of clean, running water. Tilt head so poison does not run from one eye into the other.
- Continue washing intermittently for 15 minutes or more.
- DO NOT use chemicals or drugs in wash water.

### **Inhaled Poisons (dusts vapors gases)**

- If victim is in enclosed space, do NOT go in after him or her without air-supplied respirator.
- Carry patient to fresh air.
- Loosen all tight clothing.
- Apply artificial respiration if victim is not breathing or if breathing is extremely shallow. Assist respiration by giving a breath once every five (5) seconds. The pulse should also be monitored. If there is no pulse, cardiopulmonary resuscitation must be given. The chances of success are greatly increased and the likelihood of injuring the victim are greatly decreased if CPR is administered by someone qualified.
- Call a physician.
- Prevent chilling.
- If patient is convulsing, watch his or her breathing. Keep the chin up so the air passage remains free. If convulsing, put the victim on his or her side and maintain head-tilt to keep airway open.
- Do not give alcohol in any form.

### **Swallowed Poisons**

- **Call Poison Control Center immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**
- DO NOT induce vomiting if the patient is in a coma or unconscious, or has swallowed petroleum products or a corrosive poison (strong acid or alkaline products).
- If the patient can swallow after ingesting a corrosive poison, administer one of the following: For acids; milk, water or milk of magnesia, 1 tablespoon to 1 cup of water. For alkali--milk or water. For patients 1-5 years, 1 to 2 cups; for patients 5 and older, up to 1 quart.

### **Chemical Burns of Skin**

- Wash with large quantities of running water.
- Remove shoes and then the contaminated clothing. Brush away dry chemical and wash.
- Wash the victim with large quantities of water. Immediately cover with loosely applied, clean cloth.
- Avoid use of ointments, greases or powders.
- Treat shock by keeping patient warm and elevate feet 10 to 12 inches.

**This information should be posted in an area where pesticides are stored or mixed, preferably in a laminated or plastic cover.**