

healthy homes

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PESTS AND PESTICIDES TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH

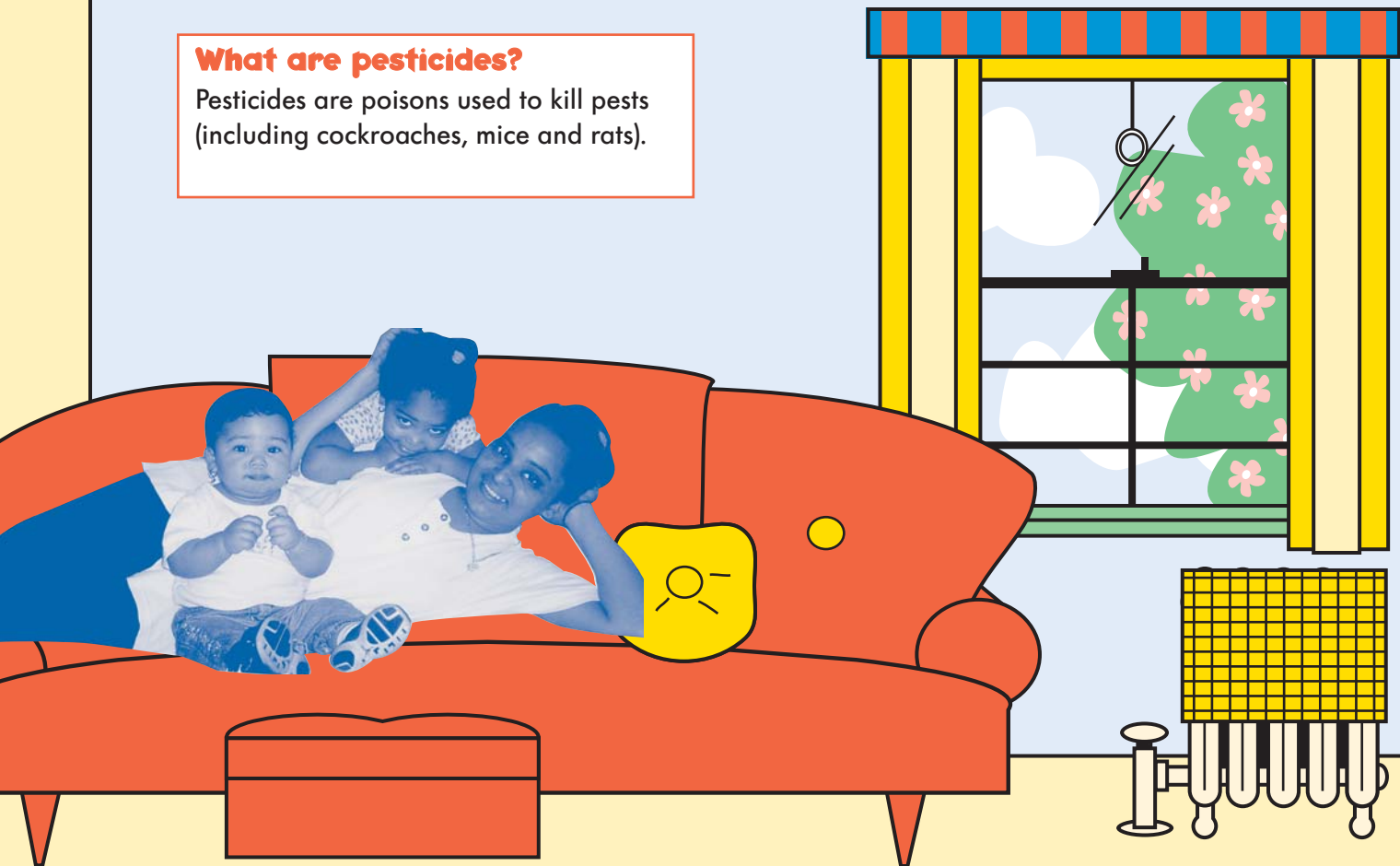
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Pests or chemicals? It's a hard choice. Mice and cockroaches can make your family sick, trigger asthma attacks, and damage walls and wiring. Using toxic chemicals to get rid of them can sicken adults and children, damage the environment, and even risk explosions.

Fortunately, there's an alternative. Working together, tenants, housing management and health officials can tackle the pest problem without resorting to illegal and dangerous chemicals.

What are pesticides?

Pesticides are poisons used to kill pests (including cockroaches, mice and rats).



SO HOW DO I FIGHT MICE AND INSECTS WITHOUT RISKING MY FAMILY'S HEALTH?

Pests need the same things humans do. They need food, water, shelter and a way to come and go. Integrated pest management (IPM) works by cutting off these basic needs.

Shut down their food supply.

- Use covered trashcans and take out garbage daily
- Store food and pet food in closed containers
- Limit food to the kitchen and dining areas whenever possible
- Empty pet bowls between meals

Cut off their source of water.

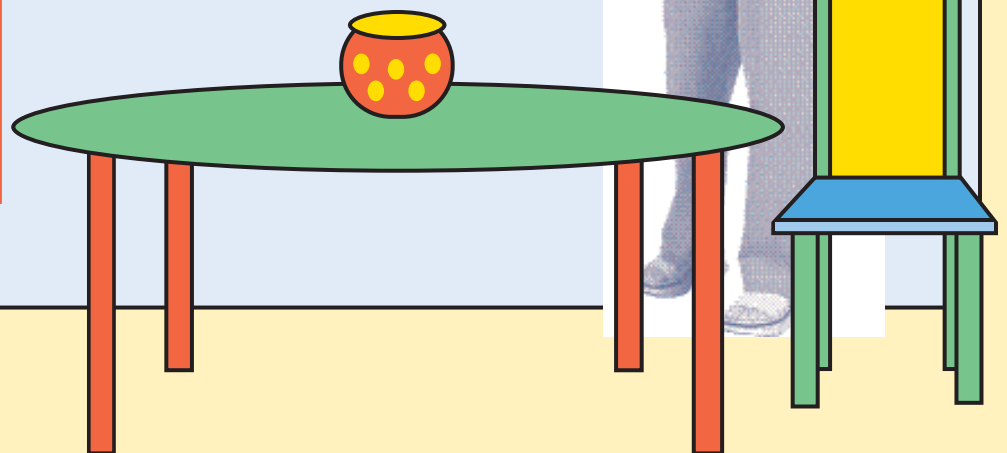
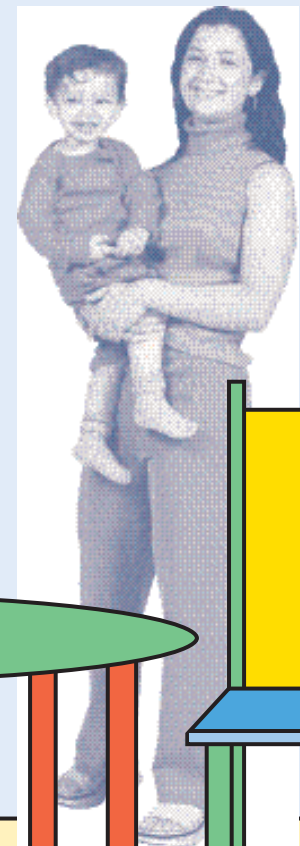
- Use caulk to seal leaks around sinks and showers
- Wipe up spills when they happen
- Inform housing management of leaks so they can be fixed

Seal them out.

- Repair window screens
- Cover vents with wire mesh
- Repair cracks in baseboards and around pipes
- Block holes in walls and cabinets
- Clean up old newspapers, shopping bags, laundry and other clutter

Erase their road maps.

- Erase their directions by washing their travel routes with soap and water



PESTICIDES ARE THE ONLY THING THAT SEEMS TO WORK. WHAT'S WRONG WITH USING THEM?

Pesticides may seem to work in the short run, but in the long run, the mice and bugs just keep coming back. Integrated pest management works by pest-proofing your home.

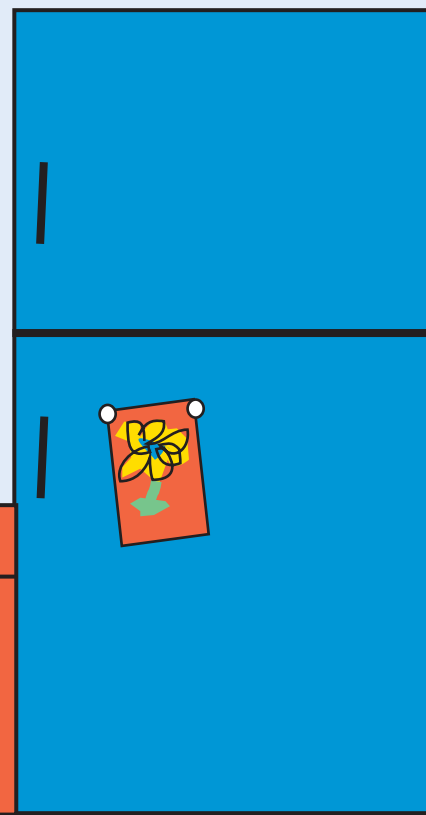
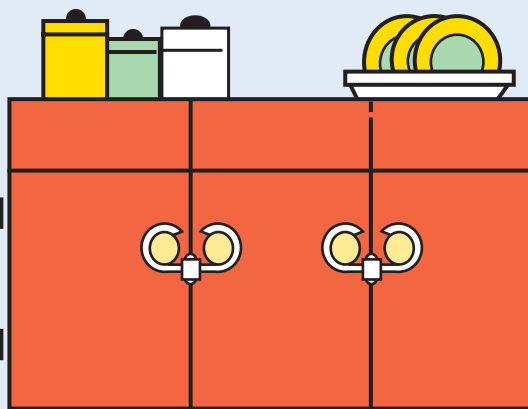
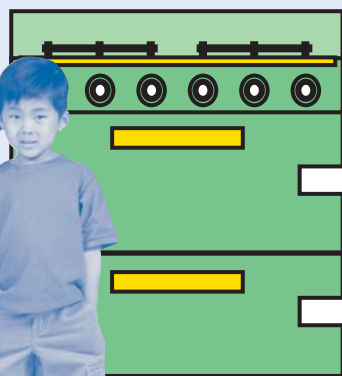
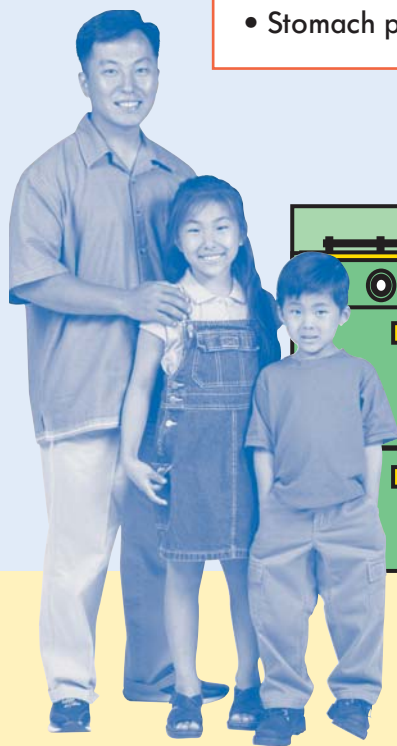
The same chemicals that kill insects and rodents are also dangerous for humans – especially children and elders. Sticky traps and gel baits are safer than liquid, powder and sprayed chemicals. Place them where pests travel or where you see droppings but where children and pets can't reach them.

Some symptoms of pesticide poisoning:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Headaches
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pains

How do these chemicals get into your body?

- Breathed into lungs
- Absorbed through skin
- Dusts settle on food
- Eat or drink from unlabeled containers



PEST CONTROL CONTRACTORS

Ask for a contractor who practices integrated pest management (IPM) and who is licensed and certified. They will use chemicals only when truly needed. To prepare for their visit:

- Empty closets and drawers, kitchen cupboards, and under sinks
- Move furniture away from walls so they can find where pests enter

Expect a contractor to:

- Seal gaps that allow pests to enter
- Check every room of your home
- Check drawers, closets, cabinets
- Leave traps in likely pest areas
- Remove old traps and bait

MORE DANGEROUS (AND LESS USEFUL) THAN YOU MAY THINK

Sometimes you will see unregistered or unlabeled pesticides being sold in local markets.

- “Tres Pasitos” contains a very dangerous poison (aldicarb) which is illegal for use in homes.
- “Tempo” contains a dangerous chemical (Cyfluthrin). There are different strengths of Tempo. ALL should be applied by a trained Pest Professional. Some are not for use in the home.
- “Miracle Chalk” or “Chinese Chalk” looks like blackboard chalk and is sometimes described as being safe for children and pets. **It is not.** It contains a hazardous pesticide. Because it looks like regular chalk, children may be poisoned by playing with it.
- Foggers can cause explosions and the mist is difficult to avoid. The chemicals in foggers can settle on traps and baits and change them so they are no longer effective.

Safety rules for using any chemical

Never use products without labels and instructions

Follow label instructions carefully

Buy ready-to-use products, not concentrates

Buy only as much as you will use

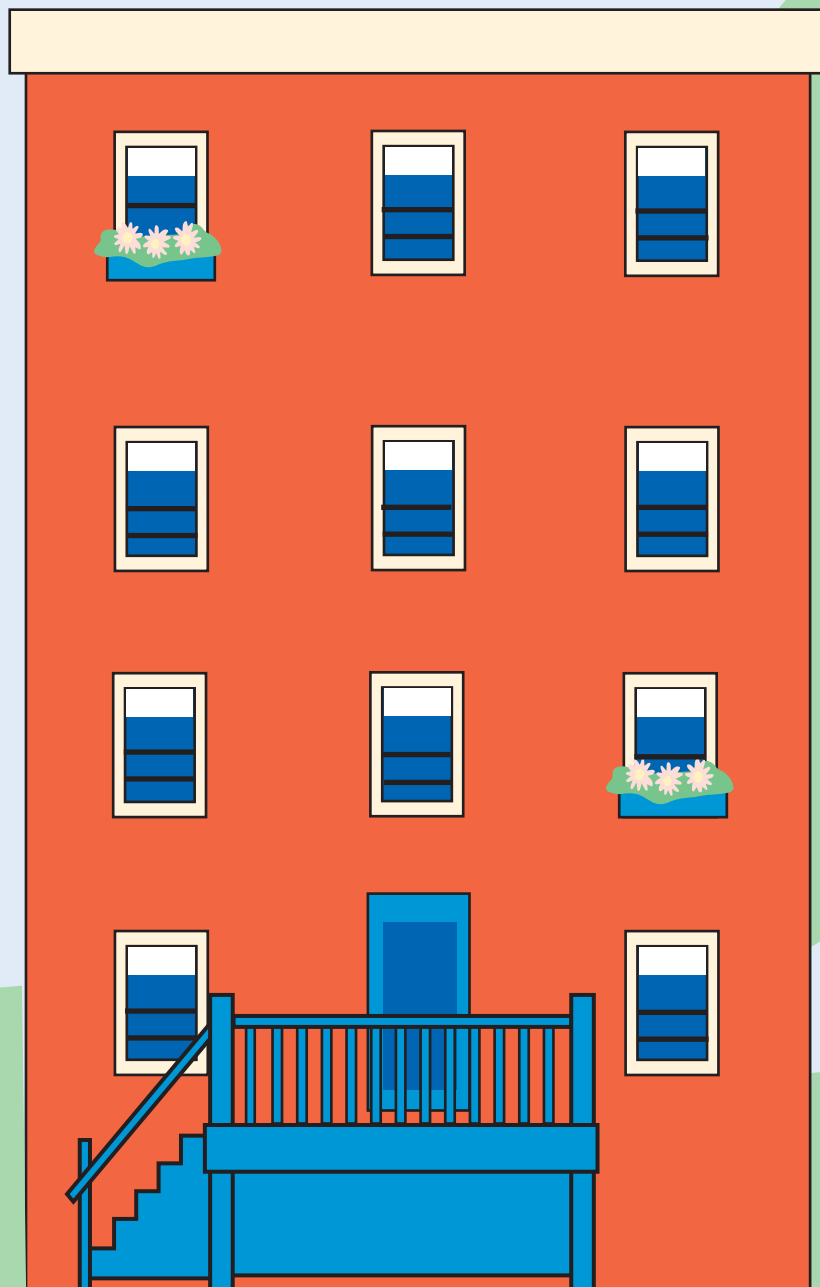
Never mix pesticides

Never store pesticides in unlabeled containers, especially food or beverage containers

Lock up pesticides, out of reach of children

Supported by funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation
and the Boston Public Health Commission
Asthma Prevention and Control Program

June 2006
Thomas M Menino, Mayor of Boston



Smoke Free Home Pledge



It is difficult to ask people not to smoke in your home, but it creates a healthier environment. It may help the smoker to smoke less.

Check the things YOU will do to make your home smoke free!

- Talk with your family about making your home smoke free (especially when kids are home). Be polite but firm.
- Ask your family and friends to smoke outdoors and away from windows. It is not enough to just open a window. The hallway is not outdoors.
- Make a RULE that your home is smoke free!
- Put "Smoke Free Home" signs or magnets on the fridge and around your home.
- Remove all ashtrays from inside your home.
- Set up a smoking area outdoors.
- Have gum or mints available for smokers.
- Thank your friends and family for keeping your home smoke free.

Call the Asthma Program at 617-534-5966 for help with quitting!

	YES	NO
Does anyone smoke in your home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would they like information on quitting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name

Date



Home SAFE

System for an Asthma Free Environment

a Program of the Boston Public Health Commission

www.bphc.org
617-534-5966

instruction cards

These easy-to-use instruction cards describe ways to maintain a healthy home.

Keep all 7 cards, or tear along the dotted lines to keep only the cards that you find helpful.

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trash cans

How do trash cans help to control pests?

Insects and rodents need food and water to survive. Keeping the garbage tightly covered will keep insects and rodents out.

How to use it:

Use a trash bag in a covered wastebasket. Keep the wastebasket lid closed. When bag is full, remove to dumpster or covered outdoor trash cans.



Keep tightly covered

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TEAR ALONG DOTTED LINE

mouse traps

How do mousetraps help control pests?

Sealing holes in walls, under doors, and around pipes keeps mice from entering. Trapping any mice left inside is safer than poisoning them.

How to use them:

Place the trap behind the refrigerator, the stove or wherever mice leave droppings. Vacuum or sweep up any droppings, seal them in a plastic bag and throw it away.

Getting rid of mousetraps:

Be sure to check traps regularly. Seal mouse and trap into a plastic bag and throw away in a covered outdoor trash can.

copper gauze

How does copper gauze help to control pests?

Holes around pipes, in walls or floors, or under the sink are easy ways for pests to get into your home. Use copper gauze to block up holes. Mice cannot chew through it and it doesn't rust like steel wool.

How to use it:

Wrap around pipes, especially where they pass through walls. Stuff into holes and cover with caulk.



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white vinegar

How does white vinegar help to control pests?

Mice and cockroaches follow each other using a scent trail, so it's important to clean up after them. But strong odors and fumes, like those from many cleaners, can cause breathing problems. White vinegar is a healthy, inexpensive alternative to such cleaning products- and it works!

How to use it:

Use white vinegar to clean floors, surfaces, and even clothes.

Floors: Add 1 cup of white vinegar to 2 gallons of water. Wash and let dry or polish with club soda.

Stains: Apply undiluted white vinegar directly on stain.

Where to get it?

At any grocery store.

non-toxic insect traps

How do traps work to control pests?

Trapping insects and eliminating their hiding places is safer than using toxic sprays or foggers.

How to use them:

Place the traps inside the kitchen cabinets, under the sink, behind the stove and refrigerator, or anywhere roaches travel. Do not put the traps near food.

Cleaning up:

- Remove traps when they are full. Vacuum or sweep up any dead roaches. Seal them in a plastic bag and place in a covered trash container.
- Wash any areas where you have seen roaches with hot water and soap.

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closed containers

How do containers help to control pests?

Insects and rodents need food and water to survive. Keeping food tightly covered makes a kitchen less attractive to pests.

How to use them:

Store all food that is not refrigerated in sturdy, sealed containers made of plastic, glass, ceramic or metal. Plastic or paper bags will not keep pests out.



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weather stripping

How does weather-stripping help to control pests?

Mice and insects need a way to get into your home. Gaps under the door and cracks under the sink, in the walls, or in the floor are easy ways for them to enter. Use weather stripping to block some of these entry points.

How to use it:

Apply weather stripping to the bottom of the door according to package directions. Weather stripping can also seal cracks around windows.

Where to get it?

Weather stripping is available in most hardware stores.

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