



<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/tips.htm>
Last updated on Thursday, August 3rd, 2006.

Pesticides: Health and Safety

You are here: [EPA Home](#) [Pesticides](#) [Health and Safety](#) [Pesticides and Food](#) [Healthy, Sensible Food Practices](#)

Pesticides and Food: Healthy, Sensible Food Practices

Because pesticides have many uses, we may be exposed to them in a variety of ways -- through food, water, and air. You may reduce the amount of pesticides you consume by:



WASHING: Wash and scrub all fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water. Running water has an abrasive effect that soaking does not have. This will help remove bacteria and traces of chemicals from the surface of fruits vegetables and dirt from crevices. Not all pesticide residues can be removed by washing.



PEELING and TRIMMING: Peel fruits and vegetables when possible to reduce dirt, bacteria, and pesticides. Discard outer leaves of leafy vegetables. Trim fat from meat and skin from poultry and fish because some pesticides residues collect in fat.



SELECTING A VARIETY OF FOODS: Eat a variety of foods, from a variety of sources. This will give you a better mix of nutrients and reduce your likelihood of exposure to a single pesticide. [EXIT Disclaimer](#)

Health professionals recommend that you eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day along with a variety of other foods.

For tips on other ways to reduce your family's risk of pesticide exposure:

- [Organically-Grown Foods](#) - Some consumers are looking to organically grown and produced foods as a way to reduce exposure to synthetic pesticides.
- [Read the Label First](#) - an interactive label which explains the statements found on a pesticide product label and should provide consumers with a better understanding of the label contents
- [Using Insect Repellents Safely](#) - ways of choosing insect repellents, safely applying the repellent, reading the label for pesticide safety information, and avoiding ticks and Lyme disease
- [Pesticide Safety Tips](#) - a list of important tips for the safe handling of household pesticide products