

Chlorpyrifos (CPS) • Frequently Asked Questions

*These recommendations reflect what we know at this time,
and are subject to change as we get more information.*

What can I take with me?

In general, we recommend that you do not take anything that came into direct contact with the pesticide. We strongly recommend you do not take any soft goods that were treated by AAA. This includes couches, beds, pillows, stuffed animals, and other soft or spongy items. If these were treated by AAA, they could contain CPS in the soft, foamy part. If items such as toiletries, medications, laptops, dishes, books and nonperishable foods were sprayed by AAA, we recommend that you do not take them with you.

If you did not live in your house or apartment at the time of spraying by AAA, and moved your furniture in after the pesticide was applied, then we do not have concern about pesticide residue on your furniture.

Can I take and wash my clothes?

Some pesticide applications were done in closets. This could mean there is CPS residue on clothes. We recommend you take only the amount of clothes that you need. Wash the clothes in hot soapy water 2-3 times. If your clothes have a petroleum smell, keep washing them until the odor is gone. The petroleum product was used to dilute the CPS when it was applied.

Can I bring my child's toys?

Children are especially sensitive to CPS, so we recommend you do not bring children's toys with you. If the toy has any spongy or foam component, such as a stuffed animal or soft chew toy, it could contain high levels of CPS. Even toys with hard surfaces could have CPS residue on them.

Who will clean my house?

We are working with several groups, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to determine how to clean and who will clean the apartments or homes that are affected. We recommend that you do not try to clean at this time.

When will my house be cleaned?

We are working as quickly as possible to determine this.

Who should I contact with questions?

Each person or family will have a case manager from the Vermont Department of Health. Your case manager will be your contact person and is available to answer health-related questions. Your case manager will reach out to you when we have more information on the cleaning process.

Who will help me find other housing?

We are working with partners to identify resources for people who need to leave their home. Your case manager is a good starting point.

What are the symptoms of CPS exposure?

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle twitching, tearing, excessive saliva (drooling), difficulty breathing, and chest tightness.

What are the symptoms of long-term exposure to CPS?

Some research shows that children who are exposed to chlorpyrifos in the womb or during early childhood show more developmental delays and disorders than children who were not exposed.

What do I do if I've been exposed to CPS?

We recommend you remove yourself and others from the source of exposure.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

We recommend that you call your physician or the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Is there a test that will tell me if I've been exposed to chlorpyrifos?

There are tests (biological monitoring), but they may be of limited use. For example, urine may be analyzed for metabolites of CPS – but most people in the U.S. will have metabolites of CPS in urine because CPS is still used in agriculture, and is in our food. Blood may be analyzed for cholinesterase levels that show exposure to CPS and other organophosphates – but baseline samples (samples of blood taken before the pesticide application by AAA) are needed to determine the amount of cholinesterase depression, which could indicate more recent exposure to CPS from the pesticide application.

We recommend that you talk with your physician if you have questions about testing.

Should I be concerned or notify people who visit my house occasionally?

We recommend that if you are advised to relocate until your house is cleaned, then taking this action will eliminate exposure to people who occasionally visit your house. Infants and small children who spend a lot of time on the floor may be exposed to pesticide residue. If an infant or small child visits your home, please show the parents or caregivers a copy of the letter you received.