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[Low level of exposure to pesticides leads to lung dysfunction in occupationally exposed subjects.](#)

February 10th, 2009

Inhal Toxicol. 2008 Jul;20(9):839-49. Links

Low level of exposure to pesticides leads to lung dysfunction in occupationally exposed subjects.

Hernández AF, Casado I, Pena G, Gil F, Villanueva E, Pla A.

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Pesticides may contribute to adverse respiratory health effects among farmers and have been considered one causal factor for the rise in asthma prevalence. This cross-sectional study was conducted to evaluate potential respiratory function abnormalities following long-term pesticide exposure by means of a complete pulmonary function testing, including spirometry, lung volumes, and diffusing capacity for carbon monoxide. The study population was comprised by workers from a prominent intensive agriculture area of southern Spain that relied on pesticides for the control of plagues. Eighty-nine pesticide sprayers of plastic greenhouse farming and a control group of 25 nonspraying control farmers from the same area were interviewed by a general practitioner asking about sociodemographic factors, occupational exposure, and clinical symptoms by using a structured questionnaire. Multiple regression analyses showed a relationship of short-term exposure to pesticides (as indicated by a drop in serum cholinesterase > 25% of baseline levels) with reduced forced expired volume in 1 s, and of long-term exposure (as indicated by a cumulative pesticide exposure index) with reduced forced expiratory flow rate. Exposure to bipyridilium-class herbicides was a determinant of a fall in the diffusing capacity of the lungs, and neonicotinoid insecticides showed a relationship with lower pulmonary volumes (total lung capacity, residual volume, and functional residual capacity), suggestive of restrictive lung disease, and with an increased risk of reporting irritative symptoms.

PMID: 18645724 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] Inhal Toxicol. 2008 Jul;20(9):839-49. Links

Tags: [Inhal Toxicol](#)

Posted in [Environmental Toxicants](#), [Pesticides](#) | [No Comments >](#)

[Environmental exposures and gene regulation in disease etiology.](#)

February 10th, 2009

Cien Saude Colet. 2008 Jan-Feb;13(1):269-81.

Environmental exposures and gene regulation in disease etiology.

Edwards TM, Myers JP.

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Health or disease is shaped for all individuals by interactions between their genes and environment. Exactly how the environment changes gene expression and how this can lead to disease are being explored in a fruitful new approach to environmental health research, representative studies of which are reviewed here. We searched Web of Science and references of relevant publications to understand the diversity of gene regulatory mechanisms affected by environmental exposures with disease implications. Pharmaceuticals, pesticides, air pollutants, industrial chemicals, heavy metals, hormones, nutrition, and behavior can change gene expression through a broad array of gene regulatory mechanisms. Furthermore, chemically induced changes in gene regulation are associated with serious and complex human diseases, including cancer, diabetes and obesity, infertility, respiratory diseases, allergies, and neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson and Alzheimer diseases. The reviewed studies indicate that genetic predisposition for disease is best predicted in the context of environmental exposures. And the genetic mechanisms investigated in these studies offer new avenues for risk assessment research. Finally, we are likely to witness dramatic improvements in

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avenues for risk assessment research. Finally, we are likely to witness dramatic improvements in human health, and reductions in medical costs, if environmental pollution is decreased.

PMID: 18813540 [PubMed - in process]

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18813540?dopt=AbstractPlus>

Tags: [Cien Saude Colet](#)

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[Belgian minister says no to cell phones for children.](#)

February 10th, 2009

The minister responsible for consumer protection, Paul Magnette, will not authorise the marketing in Belgium of mobile phones intended for children. "With this type of phone children can actually be exposed to mechanical dangers or the risks of radiation. In fact scientists all recognise that it is necessary to limit children's exposure to cumulative amounts of radiation, even if not much is yet known about how sensitive they are to radio waves."

<http://www.elektrose.net/spip/spip.php?article62&lang=en>

Posted in [Cell Phones](#), [Children](#) | [No Comments »](#)

[Melatonin treatment prevents modulation of cell-mediated immune response induced by propoxur in rats](#)

February 10th, 2009

Melatonin treatment prevents modulation of cell-mediated immune response induced by propoxur in rats

Suke SG, Pathak R, Ahmed RS, Tripathi AK, Banerjee BD.

Environmental Biochemistry and Immunology Laboratory, Department of Biochemistry, University College of Medical Sciences and G.T.B. Hospital (University of Delhi), Dilshad Garden, Delhi 110 095, India.

Indian J Biochem Biophys. 2008 Aug;45(4):278-81.

The effect of melatonin, a major secretory product of the pineal gland, in attenuation of propoxur (2-isopropoxy phenyl N-methyl carbamate)-induced modulation of cell-mediated immune (CMI) response was studied in rats. Male Wistar albino rats were exposed to propoxur (a widely used pesticide) orally (10 mg/kg) and/or melatonin (10 mg/kg) orally for 4 weeks. CMI was measured by delayed-type hypersensitivity (DTH), leucocyte and macrophage migration inhibition (LMI and MMI) responses and estimation of cytokines TNF-alpha and IFN-gamma levels. Rats exposed to propoxur for 4 weeks showed significant decrease in DTH, LMI and MMI responses. Propoxur also suppressed TNF-alpha and IFN-gamma production significantly. Administration of melatonin alone caused a significant increase in DTH response. Although there were no changes in the LMI and MMI response, the cytokine levels were significantly increased, as compared to control. Co-administration of melatonin along with propoxur significantly nullified the effect of the pesticide on the CMI response, except DTH and reversed levels of cytokines to near control/normal values. Thus, melatonin treatment considerably attenuated immunomodulation caused by sub-chronic treatment of propoxur in experimental animals.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18788480?dopt=AbstractPlus>

PMID: 18788480 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

Tags: [Indian J Biochem Biophys](#)

Posted in [Melatonin](#) | [No Comments »](#)

[Sherwin-Williams Co. Recalls Krylon UV Fabric Protector Due to Respiratory Hazard](#)

February 10th, 2009

From Ingrid Schuetz:

Sherwin-Williams Co. Recalls Krylon UV Fabric Protector Due to Respiratory Hazard

NEWS from CPSC
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Office of Information and Public Affairs
Washington, DC 20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2008

Release #09-036

Firm's Recall Hotline: (888) 304-3769

CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

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CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

Sherwin-Williams Co. Recalls Krylon UV Fabric Protector Due to Respiratory Hazard

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: Krylon "Outdoor Spaces" UV Fabric Protector

Units: About 75,000

Manufacturer: The Sherwin-Williams Co., of Cleveland, Ohio

Hazard: Overexposure to fumes, vapor or spray mist from the product can pose a serious respiratory hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: Sherwin-Williams has received one report of an incident involving a consumer who experienced coughing and difficulty breathing requiring overnight hospitalization.

Description: The recall involves Krylon "Outdoor Spaces" UV Fabric Protector, which is an aerosol coating used to protect fabric. The part number (#2900) is printed above the UPC (724504029007) on the side of the can. The front of the 11-ounce aerosol can is tan with a picture of a patio containing outdoor furniture. "UV Fabric Protector" and "Outdoor Spaces" are also printed on the front of the can.

Sold at: Wal-Mart, Ace Hardware and other retail stores nationwide from January 2006 through September 2008 for about \$7.

Manufactured in: United States

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the product and return it to the store where purchased for a full refund.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, call Sherwin-Williams toll-free at (888) 304-3769 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, or visit the firm's Web site at www.sherwin-williams.com or www.krylon.com

To see this recall on CPSC's web site, including pictures of the recalled product, please go to: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prere/phtml09/09036.html>

Posted in [Respiratory Disease](#) | [No Comments »](#)

FDA — "a fundamentally broken agency"

February 10th, 2009

ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION
Promoting Openness, Full Disclosure, and Accountability
<http://www.ahrp.org> and <http://ahrp.blogspot.com>

FYI

Two reports put the spotlight on the FDA—an agency authorized to regulate "more than \$1 trillion worth of consumer goods, which amounts to about 25 cents of every consumer dollar spent in this country. This includes \$466 billion in food sales, \$275 billion in drugs, \$60 billion in cosmetics and \$18 billion in vitamin supplements. The agency is responsible for monitoring a third of all imported goods, from eggplant to eyeliner, microwave ovens to monoclonal antibodies, slaughterhouses to cellphones. But with fewer than 500 import inspectors and computer systems so old that repairmen must be called out of retirement to fix them, the agency is increasingly beset by a sense of futility."

Writing in the Sunday Magazine, New York Times reporter, Gardiner Harris, reports: "Even the F.D.A.'s staunchest defenders now acknowledge that something is terribly wrong. Among them is Peter Barton Hutt, who served as the agency's general counsel during the Nixon administration and is widely considered the dean of the F.D.A. bar in Washington. I've interviewed Hutt dozens of times over the years, and he has always defended the F.D.A. No more. "This is a fundamentally broken agency," Hutt told me earlier this year, "and it needs to be repaired."

"The breakdown is not simply about money. This summer 1,442 people around the country were sickened by tainted tomatoes — or possibly jalepeño peppers. Such scares have become familiar, and the inability to quickly find the sources of contamination has been one of the agency's signal failures. A 2002 law requires produce processors and distributors to keep track of where food goes and comes from, but the government has yet to mandate standardized record-keeping. As a result,

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in response to a scare, investigators must pour over a blizzard of contradictory packing slips and incompatible computer programs as they race to save people."

"The F.D.A. relies almost entirely on its own inspections of foreign plants. This was not much of a problem 30 years ago, when most medical products consumed in the United States were made here and F.D.A. inspectors could drive around to plants in their district. Most of those plants have since moved abroad, and now decades can pass between inspections. Testifying before Congress in April, Dr. Janet Woodcock, director of the F.D.A.'s drug center, spoke with rare frankness about the ability of the agency to do its job abroad. "The F.D.A. of the last century is not configured to regulate this century's globalized pharmaceutical industry," she testified."

Furthermore, "The F.D.A.'s apparent inability to keep names straight is no trivial matter. One reason the agency failed to inspect the Changzhou plant that produced deadly heparin, for instance, was that someone mixed up the facility's name and concluded that the plant had already been inspected. Chinese plant names, a vestige of its once strictly controlled economy, are often very similar, and translations can vary. For instance, there are 57 separate drug master files — the basic F.D.A. record of a plant's name, location and approved product — with "Shanghai" in the name. Some are obvious repeats, like the ones for "Shanghai No. 6 Pharmaceutical Factory" and "Shanghai Number 6 Pharmaceutical Factory." But others could be separate plants. Or maybe not. It's just too hard to tell."

More mind boggling still—

How does the Administration and Congressional leadership explain the fact that the FDA still lacks a rudimentary reliable computer system?????????

Gardiner Harris reports: "Compounding the problem is the F.D.A.'s antiquated technology. Its computer systems are so awful that officials have no way of knowing which names, or which plants, are real. To determine which factories need to be inspected, agency investigators must consult two incompatible databases, one of which lists 3,000 foreign drug plants exporting to the United States and the other 6,800. Which number is right? Nobody really knows. Officials have told House investigators that their best guess for the number of foreign drug plants exporting to the United States is 2,967, while the Government Accountability Office recently guessed 3,249. Neither can the agency tell in many cases when the plants were last inspected (or, more important, which have never been inspected), where they are located or what products they make."

See: The Safety Gap at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/02/magazine/02fda-t.html>

Surely, the United States of America—a nation that spends \$10 billion a month on a war the public opposes; a nation that coughs up close to a trillion dollars to bail out banks—which , again the public opposes; surely the US government could afford to provide the FDA with viable computer technology to protect the public health!!!!!!!!!!

Jonathan Cantu, of the Government Accountability Project writes (below) that the FDA needs some guts, not PR.

"After the failures of Vioxx, the respiratory drug Ketek, bacteria-laden spinach and a roster of other safety lapses, it's obvious why the agency is seeking a reputation boost. But this won't come about through Madison Avenue spin jobs. This PR debacle is a microcosm of the inherent problem at FDA that must be addressed: Officials are more concerned with limiting bad press and helping corporate friends than with safeguarding public health. There is a clear path to fixing these fatal flaws, but it won't happen overnight. A new generation of FDA leadership must provide sustained support for decisions based on sound science rather than politics or the marketing imperatives of drug companies."

We agree, "a new generation of FDA leadership" is essential if the agency is to return to making science-based decisions—rather than helping increase corporate profitability.

Contact: Vera Hassner Sharav
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212-595-8974

Tags: [Alliance for Human Research Protection](#)
Posted in [FDA](#) | [No Comments »](#)

[Sensitivity to electricity—temporal changes in Austria](#)

February 10th, 2009

Sensitivity to electricity—temporal changes in Austria

Schröttner J, Leitgeb N.
 Institute of Health Care Engineering, Graz University of Technology,
 Graz, Austria.
 BMC Public Health. 2008 Sep 12;8:310.

BACKGROUND:

An increasing number of persons suffer from non-specific health symptoms such as headache, sleep disturbances, difficulties in concentrating and more. In lack of a medical explanation, more and more persons take refuge to the assumption that they were electromagnetic hypersensitive (EHS) and electromagnetic pollution causes their problems. The discussion whether electromagnetic fields (EMF) could cause such adverse health effects is still ongoing.

METHODS:

Based on the Austrian inhabitants a statistical cross-sample of the general population with regard to age, gender and federal state had been investigated to assess the actual situation and potential temporal changes in comparison with a former study of 1994. In a telephone survey a total number of 526 persons were included.

RESULTS:

This study showed an actual EHS prevalence of 3.5% compared with 2% estimated in 1994. About 70% of the sample believed that electromagnetic pollution could be a risk factor for health. More than 30% declared to at least some degree to be concerned about their well-being near mobile phone base stations or power lines. However, only 10% were actively looking for specific information. Media triggered EHS hypothesis in 24% of the cases.

CONCLUSION:

The results show that concerns about EMF did not decrease with time in spite of scientific studies and health risk assessments concluding that a causal relationship of EMF below recommended reference levels and non-specific health symptoms would be implausible.

Fulltext: <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?tool=pubmed&pubmedid=18789137>

Tags: [BMC Public Health](#)

Posted in [Electromagnetic Hypersensitivity](#) | [No Comments »](#)

[Prenatal Phenol and Phthalate Exposures and Birth Outcomes](#)

February 9th, 2009

Prenatal Phenol and Phthalate Exposures and Birth Outcomes

Mary S. Wolff,¹ Stephanie M. Engel,¹ Gertrud S. Berkowitz,¹ Xiaoyun Ye,² Manori J. Silva,² Chenbo Zhu,¹ James Wetmur,³ and Antonia M. Calafat²

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Abstract

Background: Many phthalates and phenols are hormonally active and are suspected to alter the course of development.

Objective: We investigated prenatal exposures to phthalate and phenol metabolites and their associations with body size measures of the infants at birth.

Methods: We measured 5 phenol and 10 phthalate urinary metabolites in a multiethnic cohort of 404 women in New York City during their third trimester of pregnancy and recorded size of infants at birth.

Results: Median urinary concentrations were > 10 µg/L for 2 of 5 phenols and 6 of 10 phthalate monoester metabolites. Concentrations of low-molecular-weight phthalate monoesters (low-MWP) were approximately 5-fold greater than those of high-molecular-weight metabolites. Low-MWP metabolites had a positive association with gestational age [0.97 day gestational age per ln-biomarker; 95% confidence interval (CI), 0.07–1.9 days, multivariate adjusted] and with head circumference. Higher prenatal exposures to 2,5-dichlorophenol (2,5-DCP) predicted lower birth weight in boys (–210 g average birth weight difference between the third tertile and first tertile of 2,5-DCP; 95% CI, 71–348 g). Higher maternal benzophenone-3 (BP3) concentrations were associated with a similar decrease in birth weight among girls but with greater birth weight in boys.

Conclusions: We observed a range of phthalate and phenol exposures during pregnancy in our population, but few were associated with birth size. The association of 2,5-DCP and BP3 with reduced or increased birth weight could be important in very early or small-size births. In addition, positive associations of urinary metabolites with some outcomes may be attributable partly to unresolved confounding with maternal anthropometric factors.

Key words: 2, 5-DCP, birth length, birth weight, BMI, creatinine, phenols, phthalates, pregnancy, urinary biomarker. Environ Health Perspect 116:1092–1097 (2008) . doi:10.1289/ehp.11007 available via <http://dx.doi.org/> [Online 20 March 2008]

[Full study free](#)

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[Serum antioxidants and nitric oxide levels in fibromyalgia: a controlled study.](#)

February 9th, 2009

Rheumatol Int. 2008 Oct 14. [Epub ahead of print]

Serum antioxidants and nitric oxide levels in fibromyalgia: a controlled study.

Sendur OF, Turan Y, Tastaban E, Yenisey C, Serter M.

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Adnan Menderes University Medicine School Hospital, Aydin, Turkey.

We proposed to assess antioxidant status and nitric oxide in fibromyalgia (FM) patients in comparison to healthy controls. Additionally, the association between the serum antioxidant levels and clinical findings in FM patients was also investigated. Thirty-seven FM patients and 37 healthy controls were enrolled in this study. Severity of fatigue and pain were determined by Visual Analogue Scale. Functional capacity in daily living activities was evaluated by fibromyalgia impact questionnaire. Serum NO, catalase and glutathione were measured. Serum glutathione and catalase levels were significantly lower in FM patients than controls. However, no significant difference was seen in serum NO levels between the two groups. A significant correlation was evident between serum NO level and pain. Additionally, the correlation between glutathione level and morning stiffness was found to be significant. These findings support other studies, we assume that these two antioxidants might have impact on the pathogenesis of FM disease.

PMID: 18853166 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18853166?dopt=AbstractPlus>

Tags: [Rheumatol Int.](#)

Posted in [Fibromyalgia](#) | [No Comments »](#)

[US Government Reports on Mold](#)

February 9th, 2009

Jennifer Armstrong, M.D., writes:

At least they are recognizing there are CNS reactions to some molds, and that more info is needed.....

Guidance Would Improve Federal Efforts. GAO-08-980, September 30

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-980>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08980high.pdf>

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