

PESTICIDES NEARBY... BUT STAYING HEALTHY

A GUIDE TO PREVENT PESTICIDE EXPOSURE



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Illustrations, Design and Layout:
Salvador Saenz
Story: Salvador Saenz with Amy Liebman and Patricia Juarez

1-800-423-5437

1-512-327-2017

At the end of the day, the workers return home. Their children are happy to see them.



What is the matter with the Gomez's? It seems like they're not happy to see their daughter. They don't want to hug her.



No sweetie, Don't come near us. We've been WORKING IN THE FIELDS and we can't hug you.

They love her so much that they can't hug her. They know that after being in the field, their clothing, hands and shoes can be covered with pesticides that can get on their daughter.

Oh, Josefina. You'd think they don't even want to see Lupita! They don't even hug her!



Pesticides are chemicals used in agriculture and around the home to kill or control pests. Fungicides, herbicides and insecticides are also pesticides. Some fertilizers have pesticides in them too.

Of course we're happy! But Esther, you know that a few days ago a plane sprayed the field?

And what does that have to do with not hugging your little girl? Besides, they sprayed a few days ago. I bet you the pesticides aren't even there now. It doesn't smell anymore.



Well, even if it doesn't smell, pesticides can still be there. It can come home on our clothes and shoes. If Tony hugs his little boy, he can get pesticides on him too.

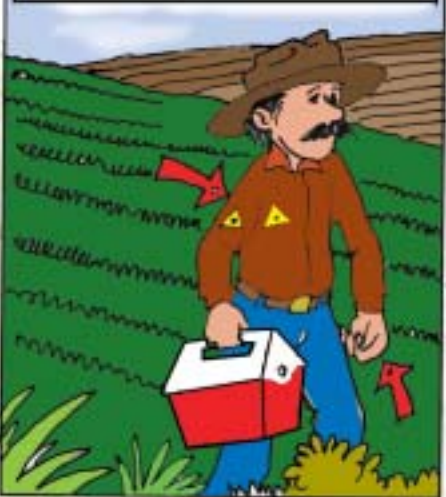
Oh, come on. They are making such a big deal out of nothing. Some pesticides aren't bad! Maybe they don't remember when we used to do the spraying ourselves in San Tito. Nothing happened to us! Here, we hardly even touch the pesticides. Someone else does most of the mixing and spraying.



We really aren't at risk. As kids, we had to help in the fields. Our children don't even get close to the fields, much less to the pesticides. What's the danger?

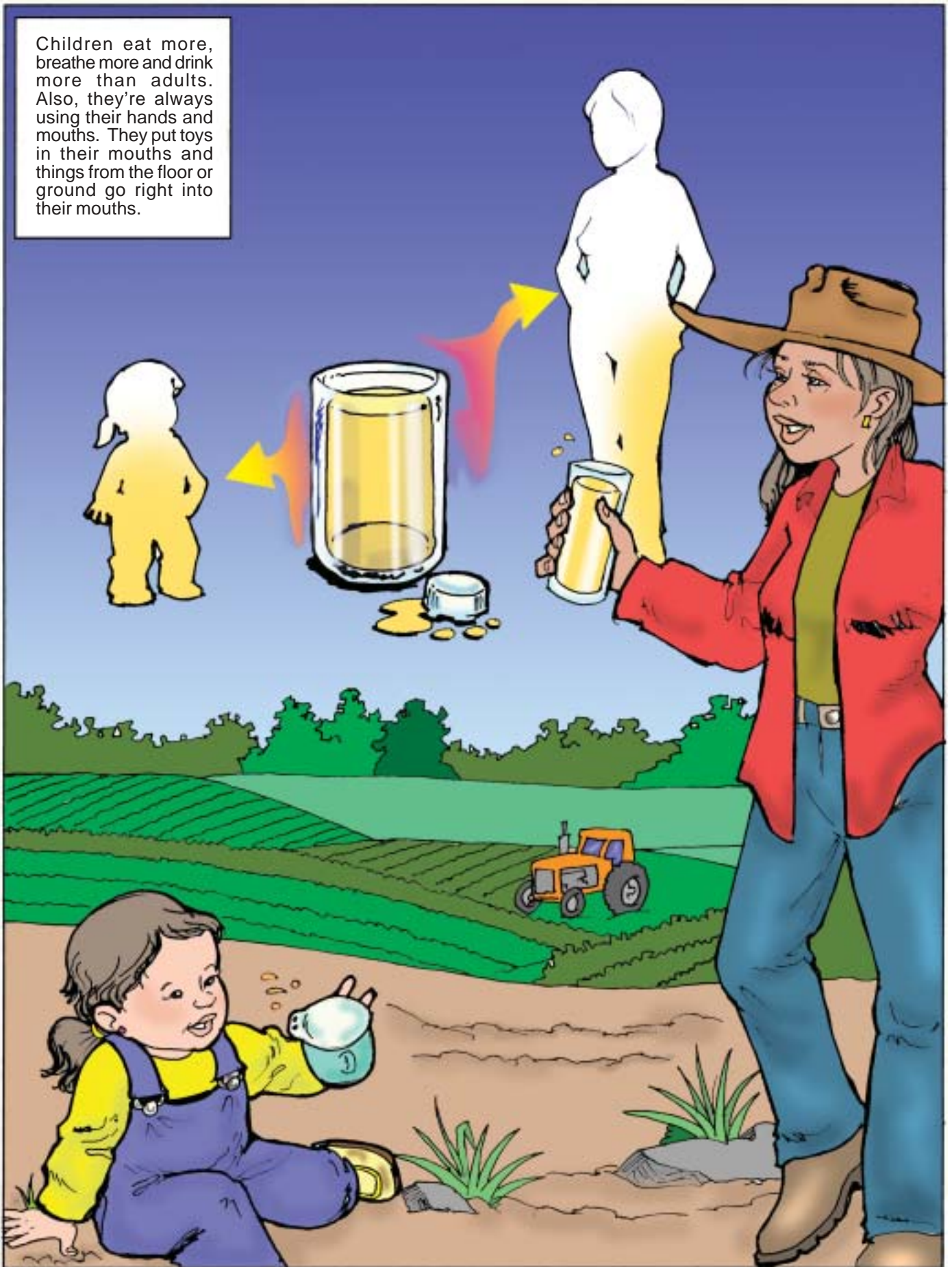
That's exactly the point. Even though our kids don't go into the fields, there are lots of ways they can be exposed to pesticides.

Kids don't have to go to the fields. Parents can carry pesticides home on their clothes, shoes and hands.





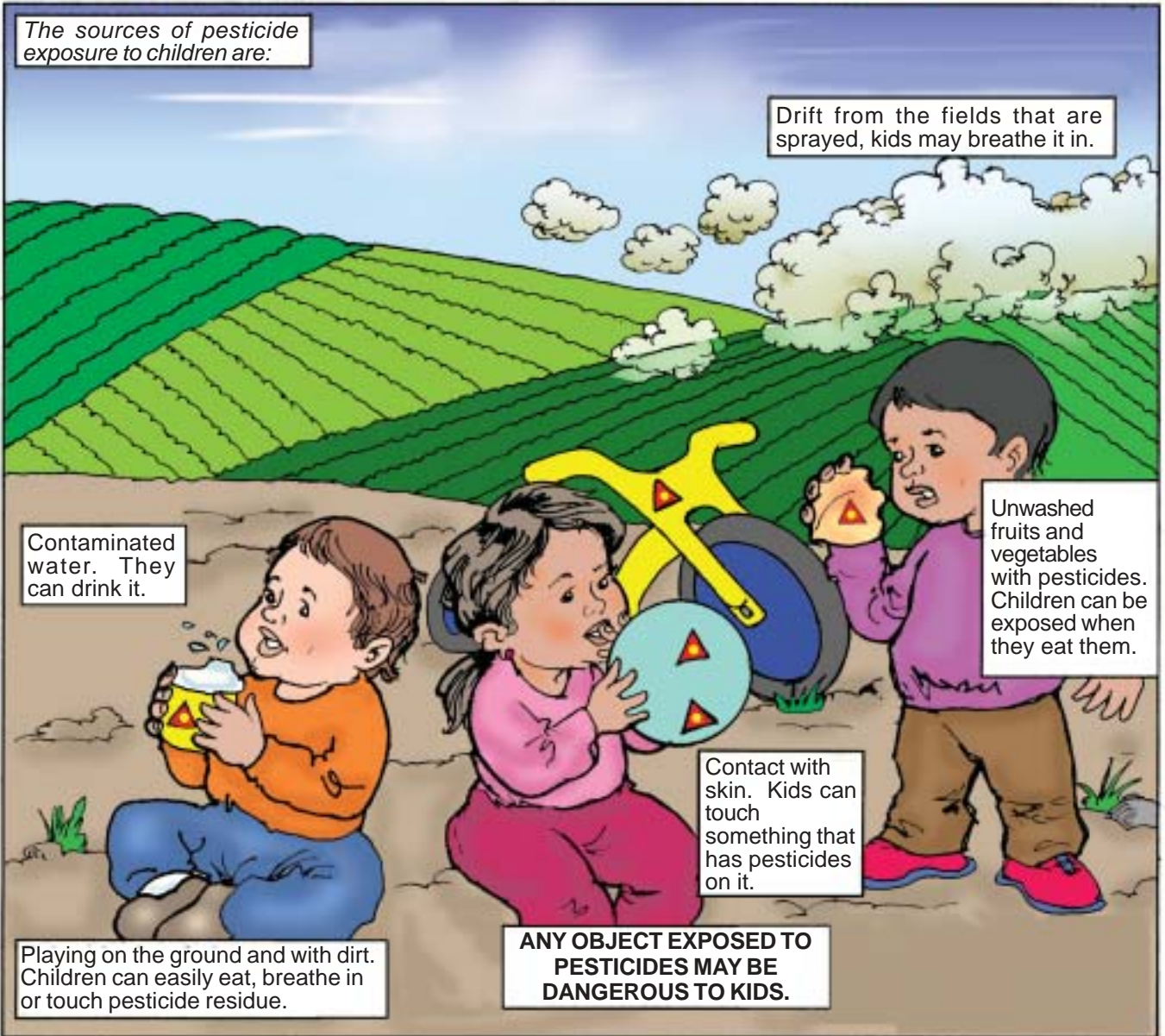
Children eat more, breathe more and drink more than adults. Also, they're always using their hands and mouths. They put toys in their mouths and things from the floor or ground go right into their mouths.





Exactly...

Children are more at risk than adults because their little bodies are still growing.



The sources of pesticide exposure to children are:

Drift from the fields that are sprayed, kids may breathe it in.

Contaminated water. They can drink it.

Unwashed fruits and vegetables with pesticides. Children can be exposed when they eat them.

Contact with skin. Kids can touch something that has pesticides on it.

Playing on the ground and with dirt. Children can easily eat, breathe in or touch pesticide residue.

ANY OBJECT EXPOSED TO PESTICIDES MAY BE DANGEROUS TO KIDS.

Children may be exposed through their skin by hugging or touching their parents whose clothes, shoes and hands have been in contact with pesticides.



Absorbed through the skin?? As if they had mouths all over their bodies!

Yeah, but it's almost like we have little mouths! Many things that we touch can be absorbed through our skin.



Kids are exposed to pesticides 3 ways.

BY ABSORPTION
Through the skin.

BY BREATHING
Through the nose and the mouth.

BY SWALLOWING
Through the mouth, while eating or drinking.



This is why we should protect our kids. We need to get rid of any pesticides that we could bring home from the fields. Here are some tips.



Wipe your shoes before coming in the house.



Leave the shoes in a special spot near the door.



Take a shower.



Wash your hands and our kids' hands.

Wow, we thought they didn't hug their children because they didn't love them. But really, it's the opposite!

Now, because of them, I take off my shoes before coming in the house. And I take a shower even if it isn't Saturday or if I'm still sweating... I know it's a safe thing to do.

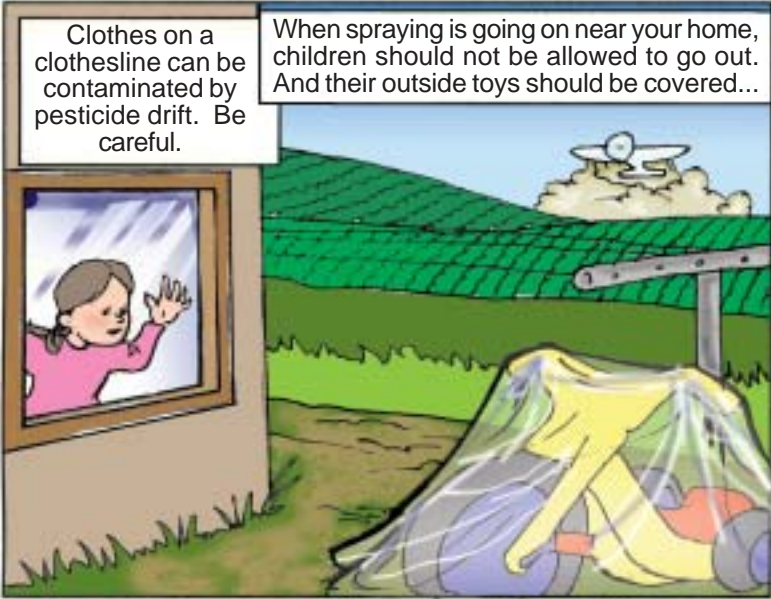
Are you going to do all that? I'm sure you will because I know you want to protect your kids.



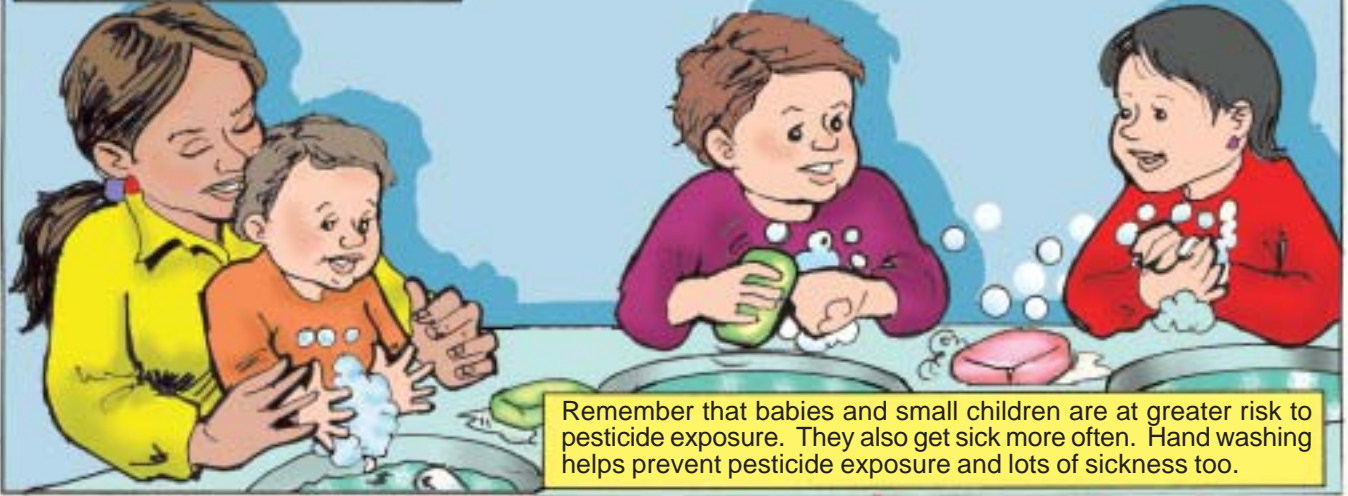
We want to do everything we can to protect our kids! What else can we do?

Of course you do. You should also keep your work clothes in a separate place and wash them separately. We do. First we wash the family clothes. Then we wash our work clothes.





The main thing everyone should learn is to **WASH THEIR HANDS THOROUGHLY AND OFTEN.**



Remember that babies and small children are at greater risk to pesticide exposure. They also get sick more often. Hand washing helps prevent pesticide exposure and lots of sickness too.

That is also why the house should be kept very clean. If it's possible sweep the floor everyday.

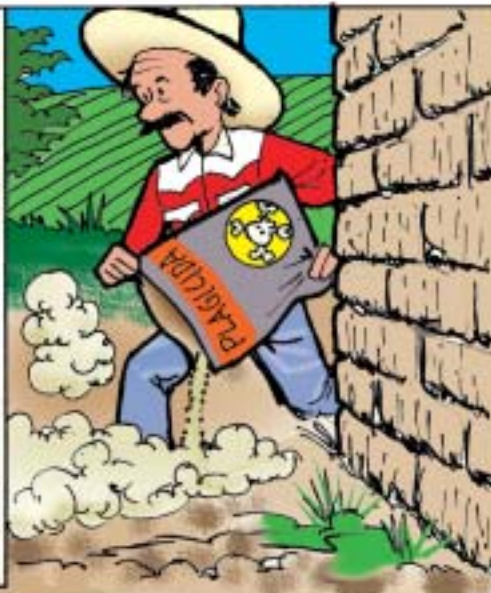


It's very important to try to keep the dust and drift from coming in the house: Shut doors and windows when they're spraying. Keep a mat at the doorway to wipe off shoes.

KEEP DIRT OUT!



Wow! So much time with pesticides all around us and we didn't even know the damage they can cause. I get the chills just thinking of what we used to do. We used empty pesticide bags for our roof! And the way we used agricultural pesticides all over house to kill the bugs inside.



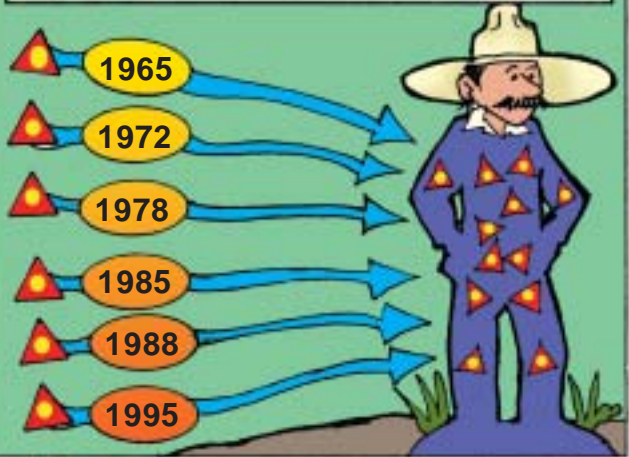
No joke. Maybe that's why so many elderly people in San Tito have cancer, like my father -in-law.



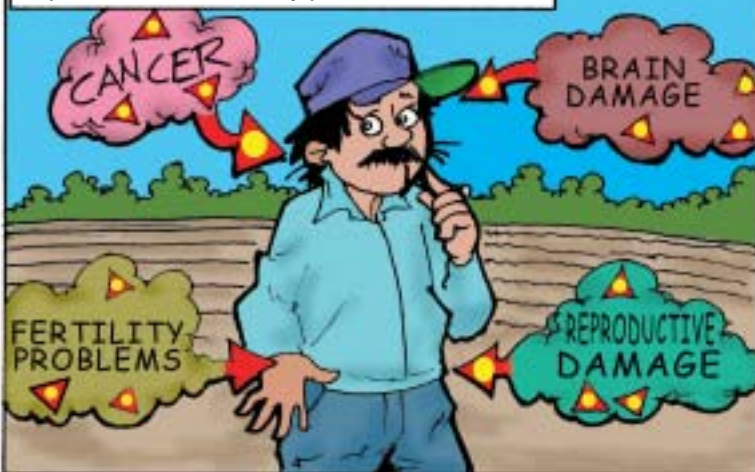
Ya, my poor dad. Year after year in the fields, using all those pesticides. Maybe that's why he got cancer?

Yeah, but my dad also worked his entire life in agriculture. He did all the spraying and nothing ever happened to him.

Maybe, but maybe not! It is true that a little pesticide may not kill...But the exposure can be LITTLE BY LITTLE. Small amounts of pesticide each season, each year.



In case you didn't know, those small amount of pesticides, besides causing some types of cancer, can also cause brain, nerve, reproduction and fertility problems...



My cousin is pregnant. Is she at risk? What about her baby?



Yes, just warn her not to be near pesticides. Her baby may be at risk for birth defects.



Poisoning can also be **SUDDEN**. This happened with the Martinez's child. He was playing outside when they were spraying. Even though he was not close to the field, the pesticides got to him. All of the sudden he had a headache, was dizzy, and he couldn't breathe. Everything was blurry. His parents took him to the doctor right away. They told the doctor that he might have been exposed to pesticides.



Did he get better?



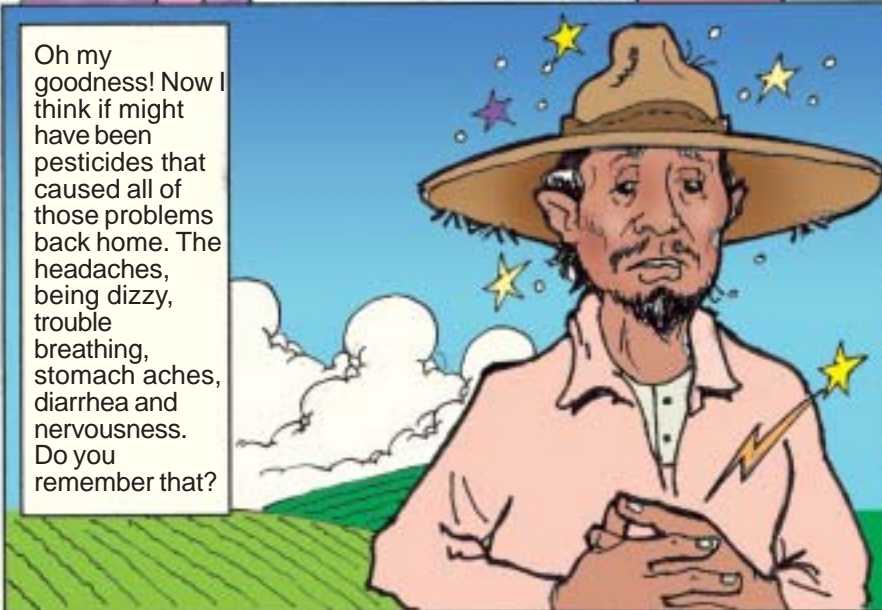
Yes. The doctor told Mrs. Martinez not to let her child come in contact with pesticides because...



...they found that exposure to pesticides may cause some childhood cancers, such as leukemia, or cause learning problems.



Oh my goodness! Now I think if might have been pesticides that caused all of those problems back home. The headaches, being dizzy, trouble breathing, stomach aches, diarrhea and nervousness. Do you remember that?



You better stop it. I'm getting scared. And I'm not going to be scared—even of what I don't eat!





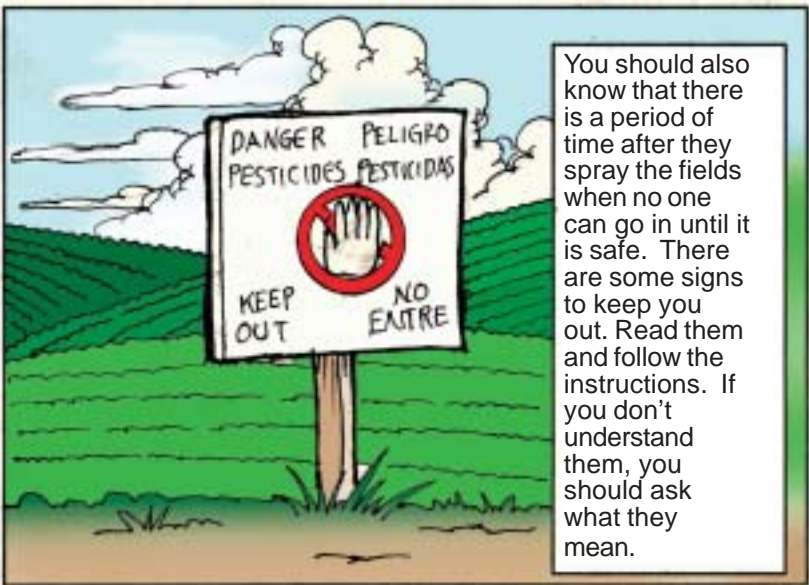
Don't be scared. Look at us, we've always worked in the fields and nothing happened to us.



But why? Why haven't we suffered like the people from San Tito?



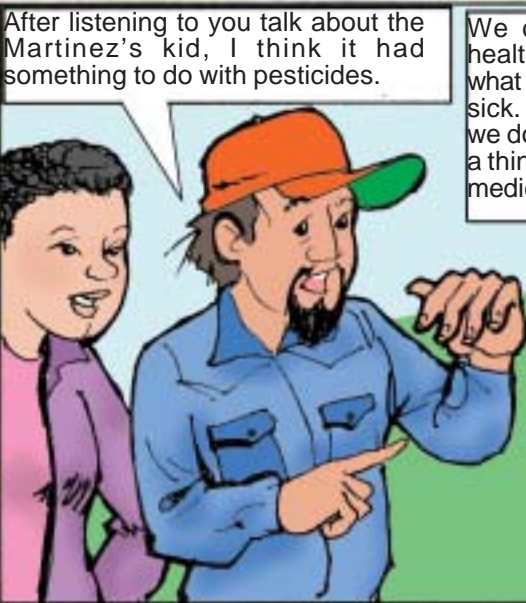
The difference is that we found out. Today we know that hygiene is one of the first steps to keep pesticides away from us and our children.



You should also know that there is a period of time after they spray the fields when no one can go in until it is safe. There are some signs to keep you out. Read them and follow the instructions. If you don't understand them, you should ask what they mean.



A couple days ago, Lolita, our neighbor Cata's daughter had diarrhea and was throwing up. The doctor didn't know what she had...



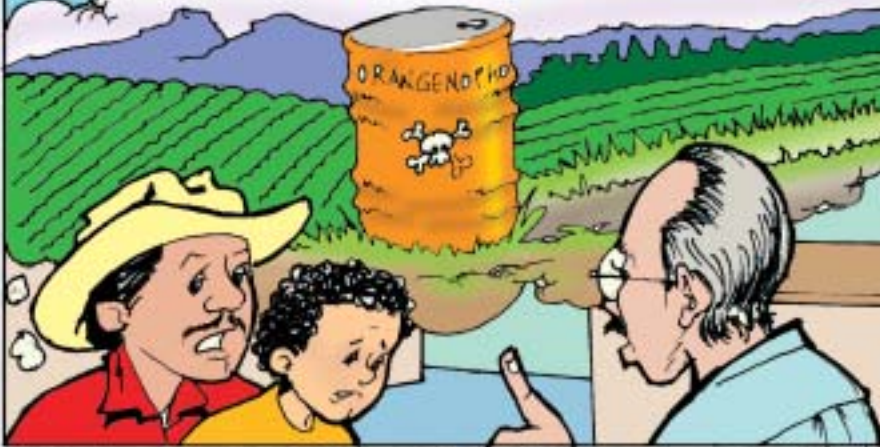
After listening to you talk about the Martinez's kid, I think it had something to do with pesticides.



We can help the doctor or health worker by telling them what we think made our children sick. We can tell them even if we don't know a thing about medicine...

If you think your child is sick from pesticides, do something fast. Go directly to the hospital emergency room. Tell the doctor or the health worker that you work or live near the fields...

...and that you think that your child was exposed to pesticides.



...take along the label or write down the name of the pesticide that was used.



And remember...Take your children for regular check ups.



Wait, you're talking about the pesticides that are used in the field. But here at home we also use pesticides for bugs. Is that bad too?



Good thing you mention this because pesticides at home can be even more dangerous. Everyone should know how to use and store them safely.



Pesticides, chemicals and cleaners for our homes must be kept out of reach of children.

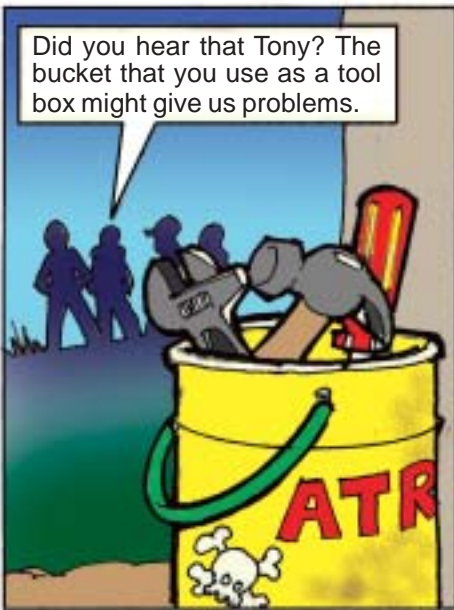


Don't keep toxic substances in drink or food containers. It's easy to get confused.



Pesticide containers have residues for a long time. Even when washed they are still dangerous. Pesticide containers should **NEVER** be used for anything else.





Did you hear that Tony? The bucket that you use as a tool box might give us problems.



Don't bring home anything that was used as a pesticide container. It's a risk for everybody.



Well, as soon as I leave, I'll change my tool box. I've already seen another one, and this one didn't have pesticides.



Make sure you put that pail in a safe place.



You should NEVER use agricultural pesticides in and around your home.



Well, it's time for us to leave. We have to get dinner ready.



Wait. Let's go over what we've learned today so we can see if we remember it all.

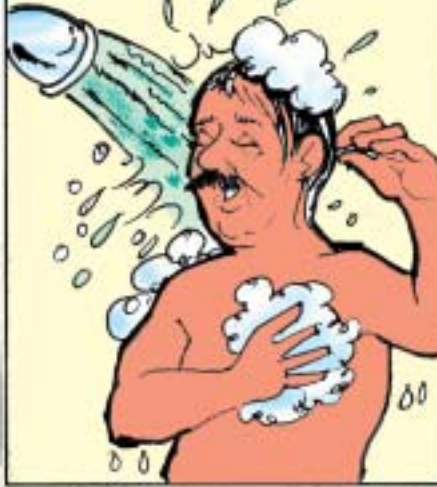


1) We won't touch, hug or hold children before bathing or washing, and changing clothes.

2) We'll take our shoes off before coming in the house, or at least wipe our shoes on the welcome mat before we come in.



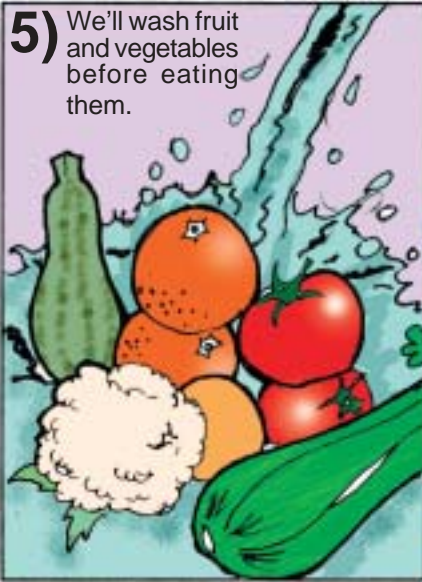
3) When we come back from the fields we will shower or at least wash our hands, arms and face.



4) We'll get used to washing our hands and our kids' hands a lot.



5) We'll wash fruit and vegetables before eating them.



6) We'll keep and wash our work clothes separately.



7) We'll cover toys that are outside when they're spraying and wash them before using.



VERY GOOD!
Now that you know what to do, YOU JUST HAVE TO DO IT!



Pesticides are near. But now that we know all of this information, we will be careful when using pesticides. And if everybody gets used to washing hands and trying to keep the house clean, we'll be protecting our families.



Knowledge and good habits can make big difference in our lives!