

Lawn Care Without Chemicals



Suburban lawns in the U.S. are given more pesticide applications per year on average than are used in agriculture. These toxic pesticides and herbicides create health problems for people, pets and wildlife and contaminate our air and water. (1)

THE HEALTH RISKS

Of 30 commonly used lawn pesticides, 19 have studies pointing toward carcinogens, 13 are linked with birth defects, 21 with reproductive effects, 15 with neurotoxicity, 26 with liver or kidney damage, 27 are sensitizers and/or irritants, and 11 have the potential to disrupt the endocrine (hormonal) system. (2)

People exposed to glyphosate found in Round-Up® are 2.7 times more likely to develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma. (3)

Pregnant women, infants and children, the aged and the chronically ill are at greatest risk from pesticide exposure and chemically induced immune-suppression, which can increase susceptibility to cancer. (4)

Scientific studies find pesticide residues such as the weed killer 2,4-D and the insecticide carbaryl inside homes, due to drift and track-in, where they contaminate air, dust, surfaces and carpets and expose children at levels ten times higher than preapplication levels. (5)

CHILDREN AND PESTICIDES

Children take in more pesticides relative to body weight than adults and have developing organ systems that make them more vulnerable and less able to detoxify toxins. (6)

A study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute finds home and garden pesticide use can increase the risk of childhood leukemia by almost seven times. (7)

Exposure to home and garden pesticides can increase a child's likelihood of developing asthma (8) and recent research studies link pesticides with autism, (9) hyperactivity, developmental delays, behavioral disorders, and motor dysfunction. (10)

Biomonitoring studies find that pesticides pass from mother to child through umbilical cord blood and breast milk. (11)

PETS AND PESTICIDES

Studies find that dogs exposed to herbicide-treated lawns and gardens can double their chance of developing canine lymphoma and may increase the risk of bladder cancer in certain breeds by four to seven times. (12)

Of 30 commonly used lawn pesticides: 16 are toxic to birds, 24 are toxic to fish and aquatic organisms and 11 are deadly to bees. (13)

A HEALTHIER LAWN

Synthetic fertilizers and chemical lawn care products contribute to unhealthy conditions in the soil which restrict air and water movement and moisture retention. They also eliminate the healthy soil organisms and contribute to the buildup of thatch. An organic lawn care program will create a lawn that stands up better to the stresses of drought and disease than a chemically treated lawn.

GETTING STARTED

Fertilize moderately with organic products in spring and again in early fall to encourage root growth.

Aerate. Soil compaction invites weeds and makes it difficult for air and water to enter the soil. Once your soil is returned to good health, the earthworms and birds will help keep it aerated. If a screwdriver will not push easily into your soil, it is too compacted.

Water your lawn less often but for a longer duration to encourage deeper roots.

Mowing the grass high will keep the sun out enough to discourage weeds from germinating and encourage deeper roots. Leaving the clippings on the lawn will add nitrogen to the soil.

Think about replacing portions of your lawn with ornamental grasses, native prairie plants, flowers and bushes. These are often easier to maintain, can add beauty, and attract birds and beneficial insects.

For more information about nontoxic lawn care:

Contact Good Nature Organic Lawn Care for service or to purchase organic supplies at office@whygoodnature.com or 216-641-9800 and visit their website at www.whygoodnature.com

Read *The Chemical Free Lawn* by Warren Schultz

Visit the website of the National Coalition for Pesticide Free Lawns at www.pesticidefreelawns.org

Visit the website of Beyond Pesticides at www.beyondpesticides.org

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