

DIOXIN & DIOXIN-LIKE CHEMICALS

What is it?

PCDDs and PCDFs are contaminant byproducts in the manufacture of some pesticides such as pentachlorophenol. These chemicals can also be created by backyard burn barrels and can be found in diesel exhaust.

How is it used?

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How does the contaminant travel?

PCDDs and PCDFs do not dissolve in water and tend to remain in place in soil. Their breakdown in soil can take years.

How do you know if you have been exposed?

You can be exposed to small amounts of PCDDs and PCDFs in contaminated food such as eggs, meat, fish, and dairy products. Tests are available to measure "dioxins" in body fat, blood, and breast milk, but are not widely available. Tests cannot determine if harmful health effects have occurred.

How can you reduce the risk of exposure?

- Reduce contact with soil containing PCDDs and PCDFs and wash hands after contacting soil.
- Peel and wash fruits and vegetables prior to eating or cooking.
- Reduce home-reared chickens' exposure to contaminated soil and use commercial chicken feed.*
- Chicken eggs could contain higher levels of "dioxin" if the chickens eat bugs and worms from contaminated soil.