



BASIC FACT SHEET ON PEST CONTROL

WHAT ARE PESTS?

Pests are things such as insects like cockroaches, and rodents such as rats and mice. Pests living inside a home can cause health problems, trigger an asthma attack and spread disease.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO CONTROL PESTS?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a healthy way to keep your home pest-free. It includes the following steps:

1. Contain all food, including pet food, in glass or plastic containers. Pests have a hard time getting to food if it is properly contained. If pests get into food packages, throw the food away.
2. Look for areas where pests may be entering the property. This may include holes in the walls, gaps in areas that have access to the outside, and cracks around baseboards and pipes. Make sure to seal properly any cracks and gaps with caulk or sealant. It is also a good idea to fill in gaps in areas that have outside access with a dense material, such as steel wool or wire mesh netting.
3. Keep your home as clean and clutter free as possible. Pests like to live in clutter and can easily find food in a home where spills and crumbs are not cleaned up quickly. Make sure to keep trash covered and take it out frequently.
4. Reduce the number of pests already inside the home. Use pesticides with cautions. They are poisonous (toxic), can remain for long periods, and can be dangerous to humans and pets. If using pesticides, it is best to use ones with a low toxicity rating. Examples of less toxic pesticides are boric acid and hydrogen peroxide. Boric acid is effective in getting rid of a wide range of insect pests and when used with hydrogen peroxide, is effective against mold and mildew.

More information about pests, integrated pest management and pesticides is available from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) www.epa.gov/pesticides/about/index.htm, from the Environmental Health Watch at www.ehw.org, and from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at www.hud.gov.