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## **Toxicity due to organophosphorus compounds: what about chronic exposure?**

[De Silva HJ](#), [Samarawickrema NA](#), [Wickremasinghe AR](#).

### **Source**

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### **Abstract**

The inappropriate use of toxic chemicals is common in developing countries, where it leads to excessive exposure and high risks of unintentional poisoning. The risks are particularly high with the pesticides used in agriculture, where poor rural populations live and work in close proximity to these compounds, which are often stored in and around the home. It is estimated that 99% of all deaths from pesticide poisoning occur in developing countries. Whilst the acute toxicity of pesticides has been well documented, there is still relatively little known of the effects on health of chronic pesticide exposure. Organophosphate insecticides have been extensively used in agriculture in developing countries, with little protection for the communities and individuals thus exposed.

Given the indisputable chronic exposure of vulnerable groups to organophosphate compounds, including pregnant women, the fetus and young children, the potential for widespread adverse effects is considerable. Thus, whilst there is some evidence that chronic exposure may have adverse effects on health, there is an urgent need for high-quality observational and interventional studies of both occupational and environmental exposure to these compounds.

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