

# **Protect Yourself Against Pesticides!**

## **The danger of pesticides:**

According to the Department of Labor, farm work is one of the most dangerous occupations. This is due in large part to the use of poisonous chemicals, such as fertilizers, insecticides (used to kill insects) and herbicides (used for killing weeds).

## **Symptoms of poisoning:**

Repeated or prolonged contact with pesticides may result in immediate health problems--and sometimes death! Symptoms of pesticide poisoning include dizziness, nausea, vomiting, rashes, body pain, and small pupils. Long-term exposure may result in cancer, sterility, birth defects, and/or kidney or liver problems.

## **If you have any doubts, seek medical help immediately.**

Sometimes people do not realize they have been poisoned. You might think you have the flu. But the sooner you seek treatment, the better your chances for full recovery. If you feel nauseous, or have any other symptoms described above and believe you may have been exposed to pesticides, see a doctor immediately.

**For a list of migrant health offices, see the Resource Guide. If you are unable to find medical assistance, call Farmworker Legal Services.**

## **Spraying People with Pesticides is ILLEGAL!**

Because of the health risks, it is ILLEGAL to spray pesticides on people or in wind that can blow on people. The law requires a farmer to warn workers if they are going to work in a field that has been sprayed.

## **Report All Incidents of Pesticide Exposure Immediately**

If you or someone you know has been exposed to pesticides, please tell Farmworker Legal Services IMMEDIATELY so that we can investigate and make sure it does not happen again. Evidence of pesticide abuse sometimes disappears quickly, so the sooner you call us the better.

## **Protect yourself:**

Pesticides can enter your body through your mouth, by breathing, or by eating unwashed fruits or vegetables. Pesticides can also enter your body through your skin by brushing, or touching plants that have been sprayed. So remember:

- Wash your hands with soap before eating.
- Don't eat, smoke, or sleep near areas where pesticides have been used.
- Bathe and wash your hair as soon as you get home.
- Don't allow children to play in fields sprayed by pesticides or where pesticides are stored.
- Put on clean clothes after you bathe.
- Keep work clothes out of children's reach and wash them separately.
- If you must apply the pesticides, insist that your boss provide protective clothing.
- Don't use cans or boxes that were used to contain pesticides.