

Health Questions and Answers for Sevin®SL Insecticidal Products

Prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, CalEPA



Q: *What is Sevin®SL?*

A: Sevin®SL (Sevin® Soluble Liquid concentrate) is an insecticidal product containing the active ingredient carbaryl. Sevin®SL is used to control a wide variety of insects and is commonly applied to plants, trees, soil, and lawns. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) uses Sevin®SL to control and manage invasive species. When used, it is first diluted with water and then applied to foliage of host plants. After application, carbaryl stays mainly on the surface of soil and plants and does not enter the plant tissues.

Q: *How does the active ingredient, carbaryl, work?*

A: Carbaryl belongs to a class of insecticides called carbamates. It is taken up by insects via direct contact or ingestion and slows the breakdown of a key chemical in their nervous system. When not broken down, the chemical accumulates in the space between nerve cells, disrupts the nervous system, and kills the insect.

Q: *What are carbaryl's human health effects?*

A: Animal testing shows carbaryl caused effects in the reproductive, developmental and nervous systems, and cancer. Nervous-system effects have been reported in humans, mainly due to accidental or intentional exposure to high levels of carbaryl. Effects in the male reproductive system have been seen in workers handling carbaryl over long periods of time. However, these effects are not expected from the low levels of carbaryl used when Sevin SL® is applied according to instructions on the label. Carbaryl has not been shown to irritate the eyes or skin.

Under California's Proposition 65, carbaryl is identified as a chemical that can cause cancer and reproductive effects. No significant health risks, including the risk of cancer, are expected given the low levels of exposure when residents follow OEHHA's advice to avoid exposure following applications of Sevin®SL.

Q: *How do regulatory agencies classify carbaryl's health effects and risk?*

A: Carbaryl is classified by the US Environmental Protection Agency as a "General Use Pesticide." This means there are products containing carbaryl available to the public.

Q: *What is known about the inert ingredients in Sevin®SL?*

A: In animal studies, some of the inert ingredients in Sevin®SL caused slight skin or eye irritation when applied at concentrations significantly higher than what humans would be exposed to from Sevin®SL applications. When Sevin®SL is used according to label instructions, it is highly diluted with water before application, resulting in a very low level of exposure to any one inert ingredient.

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Q: *What precautions should people take when Sevin®SL is applied in their yard?*

A: As a precaution, individuals should stay indoors during treatment, close all windows and doors that open to the outside, and turn off ventilation systems that receive outside air. Inhalation exposure is expected to be minimal because the material has a very low tendency to evaporate. Follow all instructions provided by CDFA.

Q: *What precautions should people take after Sevin®SL is applied in their yard?*

A: After the treatment, residents should not perform yard work or allow children to play near treated areas immediately after the treatment. Wait until the material has dried before entering into the treated areas. For those wishing to take extra precaution, wait at least 24 hours after treatment before entering the treated area. If it is necessary to enter prior to the material drying, wear gloves and clothes to protect the skin from direct contact with the residues. Wash skin and clothing if contact occurs. Follow all instructions provided by CDFA.

Q: *Can I eat fruits and vegetables from plants treated with Sevin®SL?*

A: Fruits and vegetables grown in residential settings can be harvested starting 7 days after Sevin®SL application. After harvesting fruits or vegetables from treated plants, thoroughly wash your hands as well as the fruits and vegetables.

Q: *Are there other products on the market that contain carbaryl?*

A: There are many pesticide products available that contain carbaryl as the active ingredient.

Q: *What should I do if I feel sick after the application of Sevin®SL?*

A: Call the California Poison Control System hotline at (800) 222-1222 or consult with your physician.

For further information, please contact:

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