

PESTICIDES

A research study has found that women with the highest exposure to the pesticide DDE, a derivative of DDT, had four times the breast cancer risk of women with the least exposure (Wolff et al 1993). Compounds like DDT increase the amount of oestrogen produced by the body. This information is from Rose Sorger, Research Officer for the Healthsharing Women's Health Resource Service in her article 'Toxic Residues and Breast Cancer'.

Researchers Hunter and Kelsey (1993) state that breast cancer is clearly linked to oestrogens and both DDT and DDE are 'weakly estrogenic', this raises the interesting point that this

source of oestrogenic stimulus would appear to be small, relative to other sources of oestrogens, such as oral contraceptives and post-menopausal hormones.

Dr Kate Short, author of **Quick Poison, Slow Poison** considers there is a deliberate and orchestrated campaign on the part of the international pesticide industry to minimise the dangers and promote a myth of 'non-persistence', this view holds that chemicals such as DDT and Dieldrin are compromised, but associated chemicals break down in the environment and are not harmful.

The use and effects of pesticides are global issues requiring responsible action across many sectors of society. It is a major public policy challenge which goes to the heart of human, animal and plant survival.

Source: 'Toxic Residues and Breast Cancer' by Rose Sorger, Healthsharing Women, Vol.4, No.6, June-July 1994. Newsletter of Healthsharing Women's Health Resource Service, 373 Little Bourke St., Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3000.

Safer, cheaper methods

CAP says traditional methods can be used to keep hair healthy and, if you feel the need, also color it. E.g., henna leaves for natural henna treatment, grind some *henna leaves* and squeeze out the juice. Massage into your scalp and work as a shampoo, comb well so that it is evenly distributed. Leave on for at least an hour. Alternatively, grind the leaves into a thick paste, and add some egg white and a few drops of lime juice, make sure the mixture is not too watery then pat it on hair, leave on till dry or when the desired colour is obtained,

for a darker colour, the process can be repeated.

Coconut milk softens and moisturises the hair, thus preventing dryness and split ends. Better yet, add tamarind to the santan and leave standing for 10-20 minutes before applying to your hair. Towel-wrap it for at least half-an-hour. The combination will enrich the hair colour, making it very black as well as smoothen rough ends. *Chinese herbs* like tong kui and pai chan, when boiled and taken regularly, increase the strength and elasticity of the hair, and help prevent greyness, some women also

wash their hair regularly with the concoction.

Gingelly oils, extracts from sesame seeds are popular among Indians. When rubbed deep into the scalp the oil cools the head and helps maintain the hair, *Gingelly oils* also reduce thinning, breakage, dandruff and dryness.

Source: UTUSAN Konsumer, April 1994, Consumers Association of Penang 228 Jalan Macalister, 10400 Penang, Malaysia.



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