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Natural Rat and Mouse Control Habits

Pesticide poisoning is a real hazard if you're using toxic chemicals to try to get rid of rats and mice in your home or yard. Not only do these chemicals put your pets and children at risk, they are also killing wildlife in higher number than ever before. But natural rat repellents and mouse deterrents are available that are chemical-free, safe, and effective.



Quick Guide: Rodent Pesticide Health Effects

- **Pesticide poisoning:** Chemicals used as mouse and rat poisons are toxic to both humans and pets. As anticoagulants (blood-clot preventers), these poisons lead to symptoms like external bleeding, bloody urine and stool, nosebleeds, and pale gums.^[i] Though the EPA doesn't track pesticide poisonings, the state of California does – they reported 7,600 pesticide poisoning cases from 2000 to 2008, half of which occurred at home, in school yards, and on golf courses.^[ii]
- **Pesticides and wildlife health:** Poisons used to kill mice and rates are highly toxic to many birds, including the common barn owl, foxes, skunks, deer, possums, golden eagles, hawks, raccoons, coyotes, bobcats, and mountain lions. The pesticides cause gruesome deaths by stomach hemorrhages and other symptoms – only one dose of these powerful pesticides is needed to cause death.^[iii]
- **Most dangerous rodenticides:** The pesticides that are most dangerous to wildlife and humans go by the names of Havoc, Talon, Contrac, Maki, Ratimus and d-CON Mouse Pruf II.

Take Action! Natural Mouse and Rat Repellents

1. **Decide against poisons:** Protect your family from poisonings and protect wildlife by choosing integrated pest management techniques like chemical-free rat and mice control methods. Especially avoid Havoc, Talon, Contrac, Maki, Ratimus and d-CON Mouse Pruf II.
2. **Mechanical rodent proofing is best:** Orkin tells us that the best rat and mouse deterrent is a closed door, window, or screen.^[iv] Physically repelling these rodents is the best way to keep them out of your home, shed, or garage, so seal up holes and cracks with steel wool, weatherstripping and expanding insulation, and install or fix broken screens to ensure there are no entry routes.
3. **Remove rodent temptations:** Rodents are attracted to the smell of food – anything left on the counter, in the pet dish, or in your garbage cans. Be sure to remove these food temptations as a natural rat repellent.
4. **Bring out the predator pee:** The urine of rodent predators act as natural deterrents and repellents for mice and rats, [PredatorPee](#) sells packaged options, but if you have pets, try using their dog hair, cat hair, cat litter, or dog urine strategically placed to keep rodents away without chemicals.
5. **Essential oils:** [Fresh Cab](#) carries a Balsam fir oil that can be used as a natural rat or mouse deterrent. It is a non-food, biochemical pesticide that repels rodents and is approved by the US EPA as safe for use in residential locations.
6. **Try chemical-free traps:** As a last resort, natural pest control can also involve traps to physically remove the rodents from your space. Just be sure to choose humane traps, such as catch and release traps or snap traps (they're considered much more humane than glue traps because they kill quickly, whereas glue traps make the animals suffer).

Dig Deeper: Natural Pest Control and Pesticide Safety

- Check out the EPA's guide to safe [pest control](#) and [preventing poisonings](#) in your home.
- Learn more about natural mouse and rat control using this [Healthy Child Healthy World Checklist](#).
- Find out more about mechanical rodent proofing your home with the [National Park Service Rodent-Exclusion Manual](#).

Images by [chikawatanabe](#)

[i] *Rat Poison Effects on Humans*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Orkin: <http://www.orkin.com/rodents/rat-poison-effects-on-humans/>

[ii] *Pesticides: What You Need to Know*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Natural Resources Defense Council: <http://www.nrdc.org/health/pesticides/>

[iii] McClure, R. (n.d.). *Highly toxic rat poisons killing owls, other wildlife*. Retrieved from MSNBC: Environment: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40721227/ns/us_news-environment/t/highly-toxic-rat-poisons-killing-owls-other-wildlife/

[iv] *Rat Repellent*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Orkin: <http://www.orkin.com/rodents/rat-repellent/>

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