

Pesticide exposure linked to lower IQ

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A study of North Dakota farm children found those children exposed to pesticides tested an average of 5 points lower on standard IQ tests.

Preliminary results of the study were released Thursday by researchers at the University of North Dakota. The researchers studied two groups of children in the northern Red River Valley, one group living on or near an active farm or field, another living at least 1 mile from those locations.

Patricia Moulton, an experimental psychologist, said the average intelligence score for the farm children was 98, below the average IQ score of 103 for the group with lower chronic exposures to pesticides, the Fargo (N.D.) Forum reported Friday.

"That's just the raw IQ," Moulton said of findings presented to the Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health. "We're going to look at a dose-response relationship. We're going to be able to associate the test scores with (pesticide) concentrations in the blood and urine."

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