

World Health Organization

(20.09.2005)

[The World Health Organization classifies](#) pesticides based on tests with the active substances and the accepted LD50 for paraquat dichloride is 150 mg per kg of body weight (oral in lethal dose in rats) (WHO 2005). Paraquat has been classified in WHO class II ('Moderately hazardous'). Solid active substances in this class have LD50 values between 50 and 500 mg/kg b.w. and paraquat clearly belongs to the more toxic range of pesticides within WHO class II. There have been calls that its classification should be reassessed. Paraquat poisoning may produce delayed effects and there is no antidote. These toxicological properties significantly increase the acute hazard for people exposed to paraquat. Regarding the distribution and use of acutely toxic pesticides in developing countries the WHO has made the following recommendation:

«Pesticides belonging to WHO Acute Toxicity class Ia or Ib, respectively, should not be used in developing countries, and if possible pesticides of class II should also be avoided» ([Plestina 1984](#)).