



What is IPM?

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an approach to pest control that focuses on pest prevention by eliminating the root causes of pest problems. When infestations are present and require immediate intervention, the safest, most effective methods available for the situation are chosen.

IPM follows a stepwise approach:

- **Identification:** The first step in solving any pest problem effectively and safely is the correct identification of the pest. It is critical to find out what kind of pests you have and where they are coming from. Since each pest has different habits, biology and life cycles, its positive identification will lead to more effective control.
- **Prevention and Exclusion:** Prevention of the conditions that pests need is critical to successful control. In the case of rodents, ants and cockroaches, it can be accomplished by eliminating pests' food, water and shelter. This means cleaning up food and beverages and their packaging or wrappers, fixing leaky plumbing, and eliminating clutter. Entry to a building or home by pests is prevented by caulking cracks and crevices, repairing screens, repairing drains and installing door sweeps.
- **Monitoring:** New infestations can be controlled best if spotted early. With IPM, pest populations are regularly monitored using traps. Pest sightings are recorded to document where and when the problems occur.
- **Multiple tactics:** IPM typically uses several non-chemical tactics to deal with the pest. Pesticides are used only as a last resort and only by a licensed and experienced professional.

Because IPM focuses on prevention, it provides more effective, long-term control than a reactive, spray-based approach to pest control. It also reduces the need to use pesticides.