Spider Mites

Least Toxic Solutions

- Monitor often for early detection
- Be sure to look under leaves and inspect new houseplants
- Take a white piece of paper and strike some affected leaves on it - the mites can be seen crawling slowly on the paper
- For minor infestations, spray host plants weekly with high pressure water spray upward from beneath the plant foliage
- Apply insectical soaps or horticultural oils; spray upward from beneath the plant foliage
- Keep plants adequately watered to prevent stress
- Encourage natural enemies like green lacewing larvae, ladybugs and predatory mites

If You Must Use a Pesticide...

- Choose less-toxic pesticides to avoid destroying beneficial insects along with pests, leaving trees or shrubs unprotected if pests return
- Apply pesticides only to plants listed on the label - some formulations injure tender ornamental plants and new growth
- Mix according to directions and apply only recommended dosage
- Apply correctly:
  - Systemic pesticides are taken up by the plant and make its tissues and fluids toxic to the feeding spider mites
  - Non-systemic must be applied to all infested plant surfaces because they must come into direct contact with the insects
- Severe infestations may require repeated applications; check the label for frequency and timing
- Avoid overuse of chemicals — many pests have become resistant to certain pesticides

Identify before you buy

Need help diagnosing a plant problem? Call the Texas Agrilife Extension Service @ 854-9600 and ask for the master gardener desk or email them at travismg@ag.tamu.edu
If you have leftover or banned chemicals such as diazinon or Dursban (chlorpyrifos) in your garage, please take them for safe disposal to a household hazardous waste facility. In Austin call 974-4343 for information.

Why Grow Green?

The Grow Green program educates Austin area residents on the LEAST TOXIC approach to pest management and responsible fertilizer use. Our goal is to reduce the amount of landscape chemicals that “runoff” into our waterways or leach into our groundwater and degrade water quality.

Grow Green is a partnership between the City of Austin Watershed Protection and Development Review Department and Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Call 974-2550 or 854-9600 for more information or visit our website at www.growgreen.org.