

# Tips to reduce your exposure to lead in tap water

## Follow these simple steps to lower your exposure to lead in tap water if it contains high levels of lead.

### Do:

#### DAILY:

- Flush the tap anytime you use tap water for drinking, cooking, or preparing baby formula, especially if the faucet has been off and water has been sitting in the pipes for six hours or longer.
  - Open the faucet you take drinking or cooking water from and run **cold** water for 15 to 30 seconds if there has been recent heavy water use such as showering or toilet flushing.
  - Flush for 2 minutes, or until the water gets colder and stays colder, if water hasn't been used recently. Water that comes out of the tap warm, or hot, may contain much higher levels of lead.
- Use **cold** tap water for drinking, cooking and making baby formula.
- Fill a pitcher with water after flushing the tap. Keep it in the refrigerator for drinking, cooking and making baby formula.

#### PERIODICALLY: Clean your faucet strainers to remove lead particles and sediment.

- Lead particles and sediment can build up on water faucet strainers. Periodically take the faucet strainers off all taps and clean.
- Run water while the strainer is removed to flush loose lead solder particles from pipes.

#### AS NEEDED: After plumbing work in houses with lead water lines or lead solder:

- Test the water for lead
- Clean strainers to remove any debris such as lead particles.
- Flush the water lines before using the water for drinking, cooking and preparing baby formula.

#### Consider replacing lead water service lines and lead pipes in your house. Older houses are more likely to contain lead plumbing.

#### If your water has high lead levels you can reduce or eliminate your exposure to lead in water by drinking only bottled water, or water from a filtration system that has been certified by an independent testing organization to reduce or eliminate lead. Call the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791 for a list of certified water and filtration systems.

#### Consider testing the blood of children 6 years old, and younger, and pregnant women for lead. The level of lead in their blood may be used to see if they are likely to develop lead-related health problems.

### Don't:

#### Boil water to remove lead

- Boiling water will **not** lower the amount of lead.

#### Use **hot water** for drinking, cooking or making baby formula and baby cereal. Hot water is more likely to contain higher levels of lead.

## **How can I learn more about lead in my tap water?**

Check out the CDC web page about lead in drinking water at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm>

Check out the EPA web page about lead in drinking water at:

<http://water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/basicinformation/lead.cfm>