

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING

WHERE IS LEAD FOUND?

- Lead is sometimes found in paint that was made before 1978, ceramic dishes, crystal, imported food cans, water pipes, solder and fittings, dirt, some ethnic cosmetics and home remedies.
- Some occupations and hobbies may cause children and adults to be exposed to lead.

HOW DOES LEAD AFFECT THE BODY?

- Lead gets into the body by swallowing or inhaling lead contaminated dust or materials.
- No amount of lead in the body is safe. Lead causes permanent damage! Lead can damage the brain or nervous system, interfere with growth, cause hearing loss and learning disabilities.
- Many children do not show signs of lead poisoning. If signs are present, they may include vomiting, upset stomach, irritability and restlessness.
- If a woman is pregnant and is exposed to lead, she and her unborn child may become lead poisoned. Lead can cause permanent damage to the mother and her baby.



WHEN SHOULD YOUR CHILD BE TESTED?

- Have your child tested for lead at 1 year and at 2 years of age.
- If your child is at risk at other ages, your child should be tested at those times as well (see other side for risk factors).

IS YOUR CHILD AT RISK OF BECOMING LEAD POISONED?

Your child may be at risk if you answer yes to any of the following questions:

- Does your child live in or regularly visit a house or child care facility built before 1960?
- Does your child live in or regularly visit a house or child care facility built before 1978 that is being or has recently been renovated or remodeled?
- Does your child live in or regularly visit a house or child care facility that has peeling or chipping paint or deteriorating walls?
- Does your child live with an adult or frequently visit an adult whose job or hobby exposes that adult to lead?
- Does your family eat or drink from imported dishes or use home remedies?

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE THE RISK?

Replace, repair or manage all lead hazards in a lead safe manner.

Until this can be done...

- Keep children and pregnant women away from all lead hazards.
- Always clean up lead dust and chips by wet wiping or wet mopping.
- Place furniture or other barriers to block areas with peeling or damaged paint. Do not use windows that have deteriorated paint that has been covered with contact paper.
- Cover window sills that have deteriorated paint with contact paper.
- Move your child's bedroom or play area to a room that has no deteriorating paint.
- Place washable doormats inside and outside entry doors and remove shoes before entering the home.
- Don't allow your child (or pet) to play in bare soil areas.
- Wash and dry your child's hands, toys and pacifiers often, especially before playing, eating and bedtime.
- Only use cold water from the tap for drinking, cooking and making formula.
- Let the water run from the tap until it is cold for about 1–2 minutes.
- Have your child eat nutritious meals and snacks. An empty stomach absorbs lead faster than a full stomach.





COMMON SOURCES OF LEAD POISONING

Lead-based paint was banned for use on housing in 1978. Therefore, homes built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint. Lead-based paint can chip, peel and/or produce lead dust.

Lead Paint may be found on:

- Doors
- Porches
- Window wells
- Door Frames
- Stairs
- Window sills
- Fences
- Toys
- Woodwork
- Floors
- Railings
- Furniture
- Walls



SOIL AND DUST

Soil and dust can become contaminated with lead. This contaminated soil and dust can be carried into your home. Dust is often contaminated in the home by lead-based painted surfaces that are chipping and/or peeling.

How it becomes contaminated:

- Home remodeling (sanding, scraping, and burning lead-based paint)
- Weathering and chipping lead-based paint
- Emissions from factories
- Past use of leaded gasoline
- Solid waste from industries



WATER

How water becomes contaminated:

- Lead water pipes
- Plumbing fittings made out of brass and bronze
- Lead solder used to connect plumbing (banned in 1986)

COMMON SOURCES OF LEAD POISONING



FOOD

Food can become contaminated if it is:

- Grown near heavily traveled roads contaminated by leaded gasoline or lead pollution
- Grown near buildings painted with lead-based paint
- Stored or baked in pottery and dishes with lead glaze or lead crystal
- Packaged in imported cans with lead solder seams (banned in U.S. cans)



OCCUPATIONS AND HOBBIES

Work and hobbies can expose people to lead. Your children can be exposed when work clothes are worn home and laundered with the family laundry or when scrap and waste materials are brought home.

Occupations that may involve lead exposure to adults include:

- Painters
- Smelters
- Mechanics
- Lead Refiners
- Remodelers
- Renovators
- Construction Workers
- Bridge Workers
- Plumbers
- Auto Body Workers
- Aircraft and Ship Manufacturing Workers
- Battery Manufacturing/Recycling Workers

Hobbies that may involve exposure:

- Artistic Painting
- Jewelry Making
- Ceramics/Pottery Making
- Stained Glass Making
- Home Renovations
- Indoor Firing Ranges
- Homemade Products (fishing sinkers, ammunition)



OTHER SOURCES

Some ethnic and folk remedies or medication may contain lead, as well as some imported cosmetic products (i.e., surma and kohl). Do not use these.

Some remedies containing lead are:

- Alarcon
- Azarcon
- Coral
- Greta
- Pay-oo-ah
- Alkohl
- Bali Goli
- Ghasard
- Liga
- Rueda

Some imported mini-blinds and imported crayons may also contain lead. Read the packages for this information. Some herbs and spices brought into the U.S. from other countries may contain lead.

For more information and resources, contact the NM Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
505-827-0006 DOH-CLPPP@state.nm.us

Adapted with Permission from the Connecticut Department of Public Health lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program

