Keep Your Child Safe from Lead Poisoning

Ohio Department of Health
Bureau of Child and Family Health Services
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
246 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-5332
1-877 LEADSAFE
http://www.odh.ohio.gov
bchfs@odh.ohio.gov
Most children get poisoned in their homes. A small amount of lead dust can poison your child. **Children under age 3 are at the greatest risk because:**
- They are still growing;
- They absorb lead more easily than adults; and
- They are more likely to put their hands or objects in their mouth.

**The most common lead hazards are:**
- Chipping and peeling paint and dust in homes built before 1978
- Lead dust created during home remodeling or from use of windows and doors.

**Some other places where lead is found:**
- Soil or dirt
- Some children’s toys and jewelry
- Some jobs or hobbies
- Some foods and candies made outside of the U.S.
- Folk remedies and cosmetics (kohl, greta, azarcon)
- Some ceramics and crystal
- Painted furniture

**Online brochures & resources for childhood lead poisoning:**

- **Ohio Department of Health (ODH)**
  [http://www.odh.ohio.gov](http://www.odh.ohio.gov) (index; Lead Poisoning - Children)
  1-877-LEAD SAFE

- **Ohio Lead Regional Resource Centers**
  Northeast 866-887-6779 (ext. 138)
  Northwest 800-698-3691
  Southeast 866-681-3962
  Southwest 800-957-3810

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
  [http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead)

- **American Academy of Pediatrics**
  [http://aappolicy.aappublications.org](http://aappolicy.aappublications.org) (search keyword = lead poisoning)

- **Ohio Department of Job & Family Services**
  [http://jfs.ohio.gov/Ohp](http://jfs.ohio.gov/Ohp)
  [http://www.jfs.ohio.gov](http://www.jfs.ohio.gov)

- **National Center for Healthy Housing**

- **Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
  [http://www.epa.gov/oppt/lead/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/lead/index.html)
LEAD IS DANGEROUS
don’t wait until it’s too late

- Problems from lead may not show up until later but can last a lifetime:
  - Learning problems.
  - Lowered attention span.
  - Slow growth.
  - Hearing loss.
  - Hyperactivity.

- Your child may not look or act sick. You may not know your child is poisoned until it’s too late because symptoms are often mistaken for other illness. The only way to find lead poisoning is a blood test.

- Your child may have frequent:
  - Stomachache.
  - Headache.
  - Tiredness.
  - Low iron.

A HEALTHY DIET REDUCES lead absorption

To make sure that your child practices good nutritional habits, the following is recommended:

- Do not skip meals; empty stomachs absorb lead dust.
- Wash your child’s hands well and often.
- Limit the amount of fat and sugar in your child’s diet.
- Offer fruits and vegetables instead of chips and candy.
- Offer healthy snacks between meals.
- Wash fresh food properly.
- Do not store OR heat food in unsafe containers such as cans or dishes that might contain lead.
- Do not allow your child to eat food that has dropped on the floor.

Keep in mind that good nutrition cannot fully prevent exposure to lead, but is very important to your child’s overall health and wellness. For further information on preparing nutritious meals and snacks please visit http://MyPyramid.gov.
When is my child at risk?

1. Does your child live in or regularly visit a house built before 1950? This includes a day care center, preschool or home of a babysitter or relative.

2. Does your child live in or visit a house that has peeling, chipping, dusting or chalking paint?

3. Does your child live in or visit a house built before 1978 with recent, ongoing or planned renovation/remodeling?

4. Does your child have a sibling or playmate that has or did have lead poisoning?

5. Does your child frequently come in contact with an adult who has a hobby or works with lead? Examples are construction, welding, pottery, painting and casting ammunition.

If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions, or your child under age six is on Medicaid, ask your doctor for a blood lead screening test.

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A HEALTHY DIET REDUCES

lead absorption

A diet rich in iron, calcium and vitamin C can help keep lead from entering the bones and blood.

- Serve foods high in iron such as lean meat, green leafy vegetables, instant oatmeal, prunes and raisins. Most cereals and breads have added iron in them (fortified).

- Milk, cheese, broccoli, spinach, yogurt, kale and turnip greens are all good sources of calcium.

- Excellent sources of vitamin C are oranges, grapefruits, tomatoes, potatoes, broccoli and berries.
YOUR UNBORN BABY can be harmed by lead

- Lead can cause your baby to:
  - Be born too small.
  - Be born too soon.

Also, you could have a higher than normal chance of having a miscarriage.

Typically, pregnant women do not have their blood tested for lead.

If you are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant, talk to your doctor and learn how to prevent lead poisoning.

YOU CAN PREVENT lead poisoning

- Replace vinyl or plastic mini blinds made outside of the U.S. because they may have lead in them. If this isn’t possible, wash them weekly to keep lead dust away.
- Wash your child’s hands well and often.
- Leave your shoes at the door.
- Keep your child’s regular doctor visits.
- Protect yourself and your family if your job exposes you to lead by changing out of work clothes before entering your home.
- Wash your child’s hands well and often.
THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF LEAD in a child’s blood

YOU CAN PREVENT lead poisoning

☐ Ask about a blood test! Only a blood test will let you know if your child is lead poisoned.

☐ Current law requires all children who are on Medicaid be tested for lead at 1 and 2 years of age. For more information go to: http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/infodata/CHW_initiative.stm

☐ It is also recommended that all children who live in a high risk zip code be tested for lead at 1 and 2 years of age. To find a high risk zip code contact your local health department, or visit www.odh.ohio.gov, (search keyword = high risk zip codes).

☐ To ask about a blood test for your child, call your:
  • Doctor’s office
  • Local health department
  • Local clinic

☐ Do these things:
  • Keep your house clean:
    – Vacuum slowly using a vacuum with a HEPA filter (contact your local health department for more information on the HEPA vacuum, or call 1-877-668-5323 to find the program nearest you).
    – Wash floors and window sills often.
    – Dust with damp cloth and use a wet mop.
  • Test your house for lead before:
    – Removing paint.
    – Remodeling.

  • Avoid peeling, chipping lead paint:
    – Get expert help; call your health department for more information.
    – Avoid dry sanding paint.
    – Avoid using a heat gun to remove old lead paint.

A brochure about “Cleaning to Control Lead Dust in Your Home” is available at www.odh.ohio.gov, (go to Lead Poisoning-Children, then click Resources)