

Reduce Lead in the Home

Adults may work or have hobbies that expose them and their families to lead. Lead can be brought into the home on clothes, shoes and the hands and get on the floors, carpet and furniture. Reduce lead in the home by:

- Leaving your shoes outside or by the door. Change your clothes and shower right away if around lead based items.
- Encouraging children to play in grass or sand instead of dirt. Try to keep them from eating dirt. Cover areas of bare soil.
- Cleaning floors, window frames and sills and other surfaces weekly. Use a clean mop, sponges or paper towels with warm water and all-purpose cleaner.
- Washing toys and stuffed animals regularly. Washing pacifiers and bottles before use if they fall on the ground.
- Making sure children wash their hands before meals, naps and bedtime and after playing.

Eat Healthy

Certain ingredients such as chili powder and tamarind may be a source of lead. Lead can be found in some candies and in certain spices imported from Vietnam, India, Syria and some other countries.

- Eat iron rich foods such as chicken, fish, lean red meats, dried fruit and iron-fortified cereals help protect the body from the effects of lead.
- Eat calcium rich foods such as milk, cheese, yogurt, oranges, and tomatoes to reduce lead absorption in the body.
- Do not eat non-food items despite cravings.
- Do not use imported pottery to serve or store food.

Help is Available!

Your health care provider and LHD is available to provide education, helpful tips and answer questions about lead poisoning and lead poisoning prevention.

Additional Resources

CDC's Developmental Milestones

- www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones
 - Provides appropriate milestones for children ages two months through five years of age.
 - Mobile Milestone Tracker App is also available!

Recalls & Product Safety Warnings

- www.cpsc.gov/recalls
 - Listing of product recalls that may contain lead.

For more information on the KY Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program please email: KYChildhoodLeadPoisoning@ky.gov

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION



Children & Pregnant Women



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

What is Lead?

Lead is a toxic metal found in your surroundings. It cannot be seen, tasted or smelled. Most people who have lead poisoning may not look or act sick.

Why is Lead Dangerous?

Lead is harmful because it's a toxic heavy metal that can cause a range of health problems, particularly impacting the nervous system and kidney function. Exposure to lead can cause:

- Damage to the brain and nervous system.
- Slowed growth and development.
- Learning and behavior problems.
- Hearing and speech problems.
- Difficulty learning and paying attention.
- Serious illness and death.



DID YOU KNOW?

Lead can pass through a pregnant woman's body to their unborn child.

How Does Lead Testing Work?

A blood test is the best way to determine if a child or a pregnant women has been exposed to lead. The amount of lead in blood is referred to as a blood lead level, which is measured in micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$). The goal of these blood tests is to identify elevated lead levels, which can indicate exposure and potential health risks.



THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF LEAD!

Local health department (LHD) staff or health care providers ask parents/guardians of children under age six and pregnant women about their possible exposures to lead. Depending on answers given the health care provider or LHD staff will decide if a blood test is needed.

- Children under age 6 who receive Medicaid services should be tested at age 1 and age 2 as well as children between ages 2 and 6 if not already tested.
- Refugee children under age 16 should be tested upon entering the US and again 3-6 months later.
- Any child or pregnant woman who may have been exposed to lead should be tested.

How Do I Prevent Lead Exposure and Poisoning?

The most important step you can take to prevent lead poisoning is to prevent lead exposure. There are several ways you can remove lead hazards from your environment which include:

Removing Lead Paint and Dust

- Homes built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint. When the paint peels and cracks, it makes lead paint chips. When lead paint rubs together and causes friction, such as opening a window, it may create lead-contaminated dust. Children can be exposed by chewing on lead-based surfaces, eating paint chips and breathing the dust in.
- Be sure the child does not have access to peeling paint, paint chips or surfaces painted with lead-based paint.
- Regularly wet mop floors and surfaces and wipe down windowsills.
- Test homes for lead if built before 1978.
- Common renovations such as sanding or replacing windows can create hazardous lead dust. Peeling or chipping lead-based paint should be removed by qualified professionals.
- Keep children and pregnant women away from household renovations and activities that disturb lead-based paint.



Who Should be Tested?

All children and pregnant women who are at risk for lead exposure should be tested for lead poisoning. Some children and pregnant women are more likely to be exposed to lead than others. These include people who live or spend time in a house or building built before 1978.