## Ways to Protect Your Children

The following are ways to lower your child's risk of lead poisoning:

- ✔ **Regularly wet-mop floors, windows, and windowsills.** Household dust can be a major source of lead in homes and buildings built before 1978.
- ✔ **Leave shoes by the door or outside.** This is especially important when someone works with lead or has a hobby that involves lead.
- ✔ **Shower and change clothes and shoes after working around lead-based products.** This can keep lead dust from being tracked through the home and prevent families from being exposed.
- ✔ **Protect soil.** Cover bare soil with grass, mulch, or wood chips and prevent children from playing in bare soil that may be contaminated with lead.
- ✔ **Get the child's home checked.** Have the home checked by a lead inspector if they live in a home or building built before 1978. Those who rent can ask their landlord to have their home checked.
- ✔ **Avoid certain products, foods, and toys.** Look for "Contains No Lead" on items to which children will have access. Do not use imported, old or handmade pottery to store foods. For more information on products that may contain lead visit: https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls.

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## How Will I Know if My Child Has Lead Poisoning?

The only way to detect lead poisoning is through a lead blood test performed by a healthcare provider.

## Is My Child at Risk?

**All children should be tested at ages 1 and 2.**
If you answer "Yes" or "I don't know" to any question, talk to your healthcare provider about additional blood lead testing for your child.

1. **Does the child live in or regularly spend time in a home built before 1978?** *(This is especially important if there is chipping or peeling paint or if a renovation was completed in the past year.)*
2. **Does the child live with a parent or caregiver who works in an occupation with frequent lead exposure?** *(Examples include plumbing, construction, auto repair, metal/battery recycling, and welding.)*
3. **Does the child have a sibling or playmate with a blood lead level of 3.5 µg/dL or higher?** Or has a parent or caregiver expressed concern about lead exposure and requested a lead test?
4. **Has the child recently arrived in the U.S. as an immigrant, refugee, or foreign adoptee?**

## More Information

**National Lead Information Center**
Call 1-800-424-LEAD (424-5323) for information on lead hazards.

**Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**
South Dakota Department of Health
600 East Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 1-800-592-1861

# CHILDHOOD Lead POISONING PREVENTION




childhood LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

# What Is Lead Poisoning?

Lead poisoning is caused by swallowing or breathing lead. Lead poisons children when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a naturally occurring metal found throughout the earth. It can be found within a child's environment. Lead has been used in various products, including gasoline, paint, plumbing and water pipes, ceramics, imported jewelry, folk remedies, children's toys, and more.

## What Are the Symptoms?

Lead poisoning often occurs with no apparent symptoms and frequently goes unrecognized. A blood test is the only way to tell if a child has lead poisoning. However, some symptoms of poisoning include headaches, abdominal pain, constipation, tiredness, nausea, irritability/ behavior change, and lethargy/decreased activity.

## What Are the Effects?

When lead is absorbed in the body is not detected early, children with high levels of lead in their bodies can suffer from:



**Damage to the Brain & Nervous System**



**Slowed Growth & Development**



**Learning & Behavior Problems**



**Hearing & Speech Problems**

# Where Can Lead Be Found?

**Paint:** Paint used before 1978 may contain lead. When the paint peels and cracks, it makes lead paint chips. Children can be exposed to lead if they chew on surfaces coated with lead-based paint, such as windowsills and door edges.



**Dust:** Lead dust can come from paint in soil that contains lead. Lead dust can settle on food, water, clothes, and other objects. Children can be exposed to lead by not washing hands before eating or touching their mouth.

**Soil:** Deposits from leaded gasoline, exterior leadbased paint, and industrial sources have contributed to increased levels of lead in the soil. Children may come in contact with lead in soil by swallowing or breathing in lead-contaminated soil while playing.



**Workplace & Hobby:** Some adults work in industries or have hobbies that expose children them to lead. These adults may bring lead home with them and expose their families to lead without knowing. (Paint, renovation, radiator repair, welding, stained glass, bullets etc.)

**Water:** The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipes, faucets, and plumbing fixtures. Certain pipes that carry drinking water from the water source to the home may contain lead. Children can be exposed to lead by drinking leadcontaminated tap water.



**Everyday Products:** Lead is sometimes found in certain foods, candies, cosmetics, ceremonial powder, and traditional medicines imported from other countries. Lead can be found in some consumer products such as toys, jewelry and plastics made in other countries and then imported into the United States. Lead can also be found in collectible items no longer produced in the U.S. but passed down through the generations.



# Prevention

There is no cure for lead poisoning. The primary prevention method is the identification and removal of lead exposure sources and creating barriers to avoid introducing lead into the body. Early intervention is key to reducing long-term effects. In the case of extremely high blood lead levels, a physician may need to consider chelation therapy to help reduce the amount of lead in the body.



**Talk with your child's doctor** about a simple blood lead test. If you are pregnant or nursing, talk with your doctor about exposure to sources of lead.



**Test paint and dust** in your home for lead if you live in a home built before 1978.



**Renovate safely.** Common renovation activities (like sanding, cutting, replacing windows, and more) can create hazardous lead dust.



**Remove recalled toys and toy jewelry** from children and discard as appropriate.