

## What happens after your child is tested for lead?

After your child is tested for blood lead—by doing either a finger stick or taking blood from a vein—your physician can tell you if your child has been exposed to lead. If your child has a normal test, no follow-up will be needed.

If your child has a blood lead level above the state and federal guidelines, the local public health office will contact you with information on how to lower your child's blood lead level.

If your child is lead poisoned, the state or local public health office will visit your home to locate the source of lead. Less than one percent of all children tested have blood lead levels high enough to require this. However, it is important that all sources of lead be found and taken care of.

## Where do you get your child tested for lead?

- ✓ At your medical clinic (as part of a Childhood and Teen Checkup, well child exam, or sick visit).
- ✓ Contact the local public health office nearest you for information about how to keep your child lead-safe.

## MDH Lead Web Site:

[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead)

Environmental Impacts Analysis Unit  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

If you require this document in another format, such as large print, Braille, or cassette tape, call (651) 201-5000.

### For more information about lead screening, call:

(651) 201-4620 or  
1 (800) 657-3908 or  
MDH TTY (651) 201-5797



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Local Contact Information  
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# Childhood Lead Poisoning Information



Help to Make  
Lead Poisoning a  
Thing of the Past . . .



Environmental Health Division  
Environmental Surveillance  
and Assessment Section  
Environmental Impacts Analysis Unit

## What is lead?

Lead is a metal that has been used for thousands of years to make many products, and is part of our world today. Being exposed to too much lead can cause serious health problems. Lead is never a normal part of your body. The good news is that lead poisoning can be prevented.

## How does a child become lead poisoned?

The most common source of childhood lead exposure is from paint made before 1978 that is in poor condition. Paint that was made before 1950 may have very high levels of lead.

Lead enters a child's body each time they breathe in fumes or dust, or swallow something that has lead in it. Exposure may come from lead in air, food, and drinking water, as well as "take-home lead" from an adult's job or hobby.

Cover graphic by Jan Benson, other artwork was designed by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

## Why be concerned about lead poisoning?

### Possible Effects of Lead Poisoning:

- ✓ Lowered Intelligence
- ✓ Decreased Coordination
- ✓ Shortened Attention Span
- ✓ Aggressive Behavior
- ✓ Reading and Other Disabilities



## Who is at the greatest risk of being exposed to lead?

Children under six years of age who spend time in homes built before 1978—with chipping or peeling paint—are at greatest risk. Adults who work with lead on the job are also at high risk and can bring lead home on their clothes and expose their children. Children who are on assistance programs are at higher risk for lead poisoning and should be tested for lead.

## How do you know if your child has been exposed to lead?

The only way to know if you or your child has been exposed to lead is to have a blood lead test done. There are no symptoms of lead poisoning until the child is very sick.

If your child is exposed to small amounts of lead, the body will get rid of it naturally. A child's body does not get rid of lead as well as an adult's body. A part of the lead that enters the body is stored in the bones for a long time.

Even if your child has received a blood lead test at one time, all children ages three through six should receive a yearly review for lead risks. If any remodeling is being done in the child's residence (home/daycare, etc.) built prior to 1978—or if the child moved to a home built prior to 1950—the child should be tested again to make sure that there is no new lead exposure.

