

# FACT SHEET



# Lead Poisoning Prevention

## Where is Lead Found?

- **Paint:** Lead can be found in paint that was made before 1978. This paint can be on any painted surface in your home, like doors, windows, and porches.
- **Dust:** Lead dust in the home comes from lead painted surfaces that are chipping and peeling. Sanding and scraping old paint when repainting or remodeling can also cause a lead dust problem.
- **Soil:** Old paint that has fallen off the outside of your house onto the ground may leave lead in the soil.
- Lead can also be found in ceramic dishes, crystal, food cans from outside the U.S., water pipes, solder and fittings, and some ethnic cosmetics and home remedies.
- Some jobs and hobbies can expose children and adults to lead. Some examples are painters, house remodelers, plumbers, mechanics, bridge workers, making jewelry, ceramic/pottery or stained glass, and going to indoor firing ranges.

## Is Your Child At Risk For Lead Poisoning?

If you answer yes to any of these questions you may want to have your child tested, even if your child is older.

- Does your child live in or often visit a building built before 1960?
- Does your child live in or often visit a building built before 1978 that is being or was just repaired or remodeled?
- Does your child live in or often visit a building that has peeling or chipping paint?
- Does your child live with an adult or often visit an adult whose job or hobby exposes them to lead?
- Does your family eat or drink from dishes made outside the U.S.?
- Does your family use home remedies?

## How does a child get lead poisoned?

- Lead poisoning usually happens when children ingest (eat) dust that has lead in it. Children may also eat chips of lead paint or soil that has lead in it.

## What Does Lead Do to the Body?

- No amount of lead in the body is safe. The damage lead can cause is forever! Lead can damage the brain. It can cause growth problems, hearing loss, and learning problems.
- Many children do not show signs of lead poisoning. Some signs of high levels of lead poisoning are the same as other childhood illnesses, like the common cold or teething.

## What Does Lead Do to the Body? (continued)

- If a pregnant woman is around lead, she and her unborn child may become lead poisoned. Lead can cause lasting damage to the mother and her baby.

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## How Can You Reduce The Risk?

Replace, fix or manage all lead hazards in a lead safe way.

### Steps you can take to prevent children from being lead poisoned:

- Keep children and pregnant women away from all lead hazards.
- Clean up lead dust and paint chips by wet wiping window sills and window wells and wet mopping floors. DO NOT dry sweep or vacuum, this will spread the lead dust.
- Block places with peeling or chipping paint. Do not use windows that have chipping paint.
- Move your child's bedroom or play area to a room that has no peeling or chipping paint.
- Place washable mats inside and outside entry doors.
- Have people remove their shoes before coming in the home.
- Do not let your child (or pet) play in dirt.
- Wash and dry your child's hands, toys and pacifiers often. Wash and dry your child's hands before playing, eating, and bedtime.
- Use cold water from the tap for drinking, cooking and making formula. Let water run for 1-2 minutes before using.
- Give your child healthy meals and snacks to eat. An empty stomach takes in lead faster than a full stomach.

### Steps adults can take to help prevent themselves and children from becoming lead poisoned from a job or hobby:

- Don't eat, drink or smoke in your work/hobby area.
- Wash your hands and face before eating, smoking or drinking.
- Wear protective clothing (such as disposable gloves, hat, and shoe covers) when you work with lead. Use a NIOSH-approved respirator.
- Shower, wash your hair, and change into clean clothes and shoes before you leave the work area. Leaving dust on your clothes can contaminate your home and car.
- Put your work clothes and shoes in sealed plastic bags.
- Wash work clothes in a different load than the family's laundry.

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## Does your child need to be tested for lead poisoning?

- Yes, all children, at about ages one and two, must be tested for lead poisoning...it's the law!
- Blood tests will tell how much lead is in your child's blood at the time of the test. If the level is high, your child will need more testing.
- If your child is at risk at other ages, have your child tested at those times too.

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## Connecticut Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

**(860) 509-7299**

**[www.ct.gov/dph/lead](http://www.ct.gov/dph/lead)**

