



WHAT EVERY CAREGIVER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT LEAD

Very young children explore the world by putting things in their mouths, placing them at risk for ingesting lead. Exposure to lead is toxic and can cause serious health problems including permanent brain damage. Lead poisoning may not be noticed until it is too late. This is why prevention is important.

LEAD POISONING FACTS:

- Lead is much more toxic to young children than to older children or adults.
- Children with high levels of lead in their bodies don't look, act, or feel sick.
- Lead-based house paint is the main source of lead poisoning in children.
- Soil (dirt), lead pipes, glazed pottery made outside the U.S., children's jewelry, batteries and home health remedies are also common sources of lead poisoning.
- Some jobs and hobbies can expose children to lead.
- **The ONLY way to diagnose lead poisoning is with a blood test.**

WHAT CAREGIVERS SHOULD DO:

- Share the information below with the families you serve.* The Lead Poisoning Prevention Act of 2006 requires child care providers who receive child care assistance payments to provide families with information about the dangers of lead at least once a year.

Inside the home:

- If a home was built before 1978, check monthly for peeling and chipping paint.
- Keep beds, cribs, or playpens away from peeling paint.
- Cover chipped or peeling paint with duct tape or contact paper and repair/repaint deteriorated lead-paint surfaces as soon as possible.
- Clean floors, baseboards, window frames/sills and other surfaces with warm water and non-abrasive cleaner.
- Don't dry sweep or vacuum paint dust or chips; this can stir up the dust.
- Make sure toys, children's jewelry, dinnerware and pottery for cooking do not contain lead.
- Do not use hot tap water for making formula, cooking or drinking. Run cold tap water for 3 minutes before using. Consider having water tested or buying a filter.
- Pay attention to imported foods: candy wrappers and cans from other countries contain lead.
- Reinforce good hand-washing techniques in children.

Outside the home:

- Check monthly for peeling/flaking paint on exterior surfaces, and repair promptly.
- Enclose crawl spaces under painted porches to keep children out.
- Cover bare soil with dense grass or six-inch layer of woodchips or mulch.
- Avoid home remedies such as Azarcon, Greta, and Pay-loo-ah.

WHO SHOULD GET TESTED?

- ALL children *should be tested* beginning at age 6 months through six years of age.
- All children eligible for or enrolled in Medicaid, Head Start, All Kids, or WIC are required to have blood lead testing.

TO LEARN MORE:

Your health care provider or local health department can provide important facts and resources.

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Lead Safe Illinois

312.915.6481

www.leadsafeillinois.org

At Loyola University Child Law Center

Illinois Action for Children offers Lead Poisoning Prevention Trainings several times a year. For information phone 312.823.1100 or visit www.actforchildren.org/catalog



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Eliminating
Childhood
Lead Poisoning