

Protect your Child from Lead

Lead can be found in many places inside and outside your home.

Lead can hurt your child. Lead can harm a child's brain and other organs. Lead poisoning can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention and behave. Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. If your child has started to crawl or is 6 months to 72 months of age, talk to your child's doctor about ways you can keep your child safe from lead. Ask your child's doctor when your child needs to be tested for lead.

Here are some steps to help you keep your family safe from lead.

Take Care of Your Child

- Do not let your child chew on painted surfaces or eat paint chips. Some old paint has lead in it. When paint gets old, it breaks down into dust. This dust spreads all around your home.
- Wash your child's hands and toys often. Always wash hands before eating and sleeping. Lead dust and dirt can stick to hands and toys that children put in their mouths.
- Feed your child healthy meals and snacks every day. Make sure to give your child fruit and vegetables with every meal, and foods that have:
 - **Calcium** (low-fat milk, plain yogurt, calcium-fortified almond and soy milk, spinach, kale, tofu, cheese, calcium-fortified cereals)
 - **Iron** (beef, chicken, turkey, salmon, tuna, eggs, cooked dried beans, almonds, cashews, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, potatoes, oatmeal)
 - **Vitamin C** (oranges, tomatoes, tomatillos, limes, bell peppers, purple cabbage, papaya, jicama, and broccoli)

Calcium, iron, and vitamin C help keep lead from hurting your child.

- Avoid giving your child sweets. Some candies from outside the USA have lead in them. Fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meats, whole grains, and dairy products are healthier choices for your child.

Inside and Outside Your Home

- Let water run until it feels cold (usually at least 30 seconds) before using it for cooking or drinking. Always use water from the cold tap for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used). If water needs to be heated, draw water from the cold water tap and heat the water on the stove or in a microwave.
- Keep your home clean and dust free. Wet mop floors, wet wipe windowsills, vacuum, and wash all surfaces often. This keeps lead in dust and dirt from spreading in the house.
- Keep furniture away from paint that is chipped or peeling. Move cribs, playpens, beds and highchairs away from damaged paint. This helps keep lead in paint chips and dust away from your child.
- Never sand, dry scrape, power wash or sandblast paint unless it has been tested and does not have lead in it.

There may also be lead in the dirt around your home from the past use of lead in gasoline and in factories.

- Cover bare dirt outside where your child plays. Use grass or other plants, bark, gravel, or concrete. This keeps lead in the dirt away from your child.
- Take off shoes or wipe them on a doormat before going inside. This keeps lead in dirt outside.
- Change out of work clothes and shoes, and wash up or shower before getting in a car or going home if you work with lead. Lead is in many workplaces:
 - Painting and remodeling sites
 - Radiator repair shops
 - Places that make or recycle batteries

Ask your employer to tell you if you work with lead. Children can be poisoned from lead dust brought home on skin, hair, clothes, and shoes, and in the car.

Things you Buy and Use

- Avoid using water crocks or dishes and pots that are worn or antique, from a discount

or flea market, made of crystal, handmade, or made outside the USA unless they have been tested and don't have lead.

- Do not let your child put jewelry or toys in his or her mouth. Some jewelry and toys have lead in them. There is no way to tell if there is lead in jewelry and toys. Even items marked 'Lead Free' can have lead in them.
- Talk to your child's doctor before using imported products that often have lead in them, like
 - Natural remedies- bright orange, yellow or white powders for stomachache or other illnesses
 - Make-up- kohl, khali, surma, or sindoor
 - Food or spices- like chapulines or turmeric

These items have lead in them- keep them away from your child:

- Lead fishing sinkers
- Lead bullets
- Lead solder

For more information go to www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb