

Lead is a poison. Lead can cause problems such as slow learning, hearing loss, behavior problems, or slow growth.

Where Does Lead Come From?

Lead can be found in a number of places. These are some of the more common spots:

- ☑ If you live in a home built before 1978, the paint and pipes may contain some lead.
- ☑ Paint chips from these houses can be toxic if they are eaten by a child. Also, the dust that builds up from the older paint can get into food and other items that your child puts in his mouth.
- ☑ Lead may be found in the dirt outside your home.
- ☑ Crystal and pottery may have lead in them.

How Can I Prevent Lead Poisoning?

- If you think you may have lead in your home, have your house and water tested for lead. Contact your local health department, housing or water authority.
- Have your child tested for lead. This is a simple test that can be done at your physician's office or local health clinic.
- Use cold water for cooking, drinking, and making formula. Run cold water for 2 minutes before you first use water during the day.
- Have your child wash their hands after playing outside and before meals and bedtime.
- Store food in glass, plastic or stainless steel containers - NOT in open cans!
- Use a wet mop or wet cloth with dishwasher detergent which contains phosphates to clean up paint chips, dust, or dirt.
- If you work around lead, shower and change before going home.
- Wash your child's toys often.
- Do not use crystal and pottery to cook, serve, or store food unless you are sure it does not contain lead.

What Can Good Nutrition Do to Help Prevent Lead Poisoning?

A well balanced diet helps your child grow and will also help prevent lead poisoning. It is harder for lead to get into the blood when your child eats:

Breakfast, regular meals and snacks

Foods high in calcium

Foods high in iron

Meats, dried beans, whole grain breads and cereals with iron, and green leafy vegetables are some good iron sources. Include vitamin C-rich foods, such as citrus fruits and WIC juices, when eating iron-rich foods to increase the amount of iron absorbed by the body.

Milk, cheese, yogurt, broccoli, and dark green leafy vegetables are some good sources of calcium. Choose low fat milk and dairy products for children over 2. Eating less fat may help protect your child from lead poisoning, too.

What Are The Signs of Lead Poisoning?

Lead poisoning may seem like the flu in some ways. Some of the signs are:

- ⊗ Upset stomach and cramps
- ⊗ Headache
- ⊗ Poor appetite
- ⊗ Vomiting
- ⊗ Feeling tired more often
- ⊗ Becoming easily angered
- ⊗ Having a hard time sleeping

The WIC Program is an equal opportunity program. If you believe that you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability, write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250



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For more information call your local WIC office:



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LEAD POISONING: What You Need To Know

Many children do not show any signs of lead poisoning. If you are worried about your child's blood lead level, ask your doctor to check it.



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