

# Lead Poisoning



## What is lead?

Lead is a metal that is still found in things that affect our children.

## What is lead poisoning?

Lead is a poison if it is breathed or swallowed. It can be found in paint in old houses, dirt and dust near freeways, and some jewelry, pots and candies. Even small amounts of lead in your child's body can cause serious health problems. A simple blood test can detect lead in your child.

## Who is at highest risk?

- Children that are able to crawl and until 6 years of age.
- Live in or visit homes built before 1950 that still have old paint and pipes.
- Refugee children - many are from areas still using lots of lead.

## How can you prevent lead poisoning?

- If you live in an older home, keep all surfaces clean.
- Make sure your child avoids peeling paint.
- Wash your child's hands after playing outside and before meals.
- Wash your child's toys often.
- Serve healthy meals.

## What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

- Slowed growth
- Learning issues
- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping
- Loss of appetite



- Stomach pain and cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Constipation or loose stool

## When should your child be tested for lead poisoning?

- **Before 12 and 24 months** of age.
- Talk to your provider about testing your child if your child is **under 6 years** of age and has not received a test.
- All immigrant or **refugee children 6 months to 16 years** old **at entry into the U.S.**
- Repeat testing of all refugee children 6 months to 6 years, 3-6 months after placement in permanent housing.
- Repeat testing of older refugee children if needed.

## Children who eat a healthy diet absorb less lead. Be sure the meals you serve include:

- Iron-rich foods, like lean red meat, fish, chicken, cooked beans and dried fruits.
- Calcium-rich foods like milk, yogurt, cheese and green leafy vegetables.
- Vitamin C-rich foods, like oranges, grapefruit, tomatoes, bell peppers and broccoli.



Content Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.*

## Keep your appointments with your child's provider. Lead poisoning is easier to treat when it is found early.

### Do you have questions?

Call our 24-hour Nurse Advice Line.  
We are here to help you.



English: **(888) 275-8750**

Español: **(866) 648-3537**

TTY/TDD: **711**

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