



# 10 Things To Know About Lead

1. According to the Centers for Disease Control website, currently at least 4 million households have children living in them that are exposed to high levels of lead. About half a million U.S. children ages 1-5 have blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter. Any level of lead exposure can affect nearly every system in the body.
2. Children under 6 years of age are at highest risk for lead poisoning because of their tendency to place their toys and hands in their mouths.
3. Lead can be found in:
  - Paint made before 1978
  - Imported and decorated dishes and handmade pottery
  - Home remedies
  - Water if your home has lead pipes or solder
  - Fishing weights
  - Radiators/car batteries
  - Dirt and soil/Dust in the home
  - Vinyl miniblinds
4. Prevention of lead poisoning:
  - Keep your home as clean and free from dust as possible
  - Keep paint in your home from peeling or flaking
  - If you work with lead, shower and change your clothes and shoes before getting in your car or going home
  - Wash your child's hands, face and toys often
  - Serve foods rich in iron and calcium and vitamin C
  - Don't use imported dishes for cooking, serving, or storing food
  - Never sand, burn, or scrape paint unless you know that it does not contain lead
  - Test paint surfaces for lead or any other area if you plan on remodeling
  - Avoid hobbies that use lead
  - Keep furniture away from damaged paint
  - Don't use home remedies or cosmetics that contain lead
5. Parents who work with lead can bring it home from work and their children can get lead poisoning from it. Jobs that may work with lead include:
  - Making or fixing batteries/radiators
  - Making or painting ceramics
  - Tearing down or remodeling houses, buildings, tanks, or bridges
  - Working at a shooting range
  - Working with scrap metal
  - Soldering
- For questions about lead at work, call the Occupational Lead Program of the California Department of Public Health at (510) 620-5757 or Lead in Workplace Information Line at (866) 627-1587.
6. While most people with lead poisoning exhibit little or no symptoms, individuals who have been exposed can experience:
  - Headaches
  - Irritability
  - Abdominal pains
  - Vomiting
  - Anemia
  - Weight loss
  - Difficulty sleeping
  - Fatigue
7. The long-term health effects of lead in a child can be severe and sometimes devastating. They include:
  - Reading and learning disabilities
  - Poor attention span
  - Hyperactivity
  - Speech and language handicaps
  - Lowered I.Q.
  - Neurological deficits
  - Behavioral problems
  - Mental retardation
  - Kidney disease
  - Heart disease
  - Stroke
  - Death
8. All children in a publically funded program, regardless of risk, should be tested, at 12 months and retested at 24 months. Children not in a publically funded program should be assessed at 12 months and 24 months. Others who should be tested include:
  - Children age 24 months to 6 years in a publically supported program who have never been tested before.
  - Children with blood lead levels  $\geq 5$  mcg/dl should be monitored and retested by their healthcare provider.
  - Children who live in, or spend a lot of time in, a place built before 1978 that has peeling or chipped paint or that has been recently remodeled.
  - Immigrants who have lived in or visit from countries with high suspected lead exposure.
- This is because most children who have lead poisoning exhibit no symptoms. Therefore, the only way to determine if a child has lead poisoning is for their physicians to do a blood lead test.
9. Parents with infants and toddlers are advised to test their homes, paint, cookware, and other potential sources of lead exposures. Certified professionals may test paint, dust, and soil. For other items simple home test kits can be purchased at stores throughout the community.
10. For more information on lead, home testing, health education materials, blood lead testing and follow-up criteria, contact the local Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (661) 868-0360 or (661) 321-3000
11. Visit our web page for more information - <http://kernpublichealth.com/infants-children/childhood-lead-poisoning-prevention-program-clppp>