



LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

Protecting Your Children From Danger

Children can be exposed to lead through a variety of sources in their environment:

- **Lead-based paint** - the most common and dangerous source of lead exposure. Homes built before 1978 usually contain lead paint. As paint cracks and peels, it creates lead dust that can be inhaled or swallowed.
- **Water** - lead soldered pipes may leach lead into the water supply.
- **Jobs/Hobbies** - parents may accidentally expose children to lead after working with lead-based products

What is Lead Poisoning?

Childhood lead poisoning is caused by exposure to lead, usually through swallowing or breathing. It is considered the most preventable environmental health disease in children. According to the CDC, over half a million children aged 1 to 5 in the U.S. have health-damaging blood lead levels.

Effects of Childhood Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning affects children by damaging the brain and nervous system and some effects may never go away. Damage to the child's health can include:

- Hearing and speech problems
- Behavioral and learning disabilities
- Slowed growth and development

Preventing Lead Poisoning

Childhood lead poisoning is 100% preventable. Lead has no smell and is invisible to the naked eye, but it can be detected with the right tools. Follow these tips to protect your family from lead:

- Keep children away from peeling paint and surfaces with lead-based paint.
- Wash children's hands and toys regularly.
- Remove recalled toys and jewelry from children.
- Shower and change clothes after working with lead-based products.
- Use cold water from the tap for cooking or drinking — hot water may contain higher levels of lead.
- Contact your health department about safe renovations in the home.

Find your nearest health department at
NCHD52.org/Locations

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