

A LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PLAN FOR PARENTS

These lead-safety actions will keep your child from getting more lead in his/her body. *They also can help stop the spread of “colds,” runny noses and diarrhea.* Do as much as you can. Every little bit helps!

1. **Keep all appointments** for lead tests and medical check-ups.
2. **Wash children’s hands as often as you can:** before meals and snacks, before naps and bedtime, and after playing outside. This keeps dust with lead in it out of their mouths.
3. **Wash things children always put into their mouths:** baby bottle nipples, pacifiers, and toys. This keeps dust with lead in it out of their mouths.
4. **Wash floors and windowsills with warm water and household detergent** or cleaners made to get rid of lead dust. It’s hard, but once a week is a good idea. Washing away lead dust may help children with asthma, too. Talk with your doctor about dust control and asthma.
5. **Feed children foods high in iron and calcium.** Try to get your child to eat beans, cheese, milk, cereal that says it is “iron-fortified,” lean meat, tuna fish, greens, milk, cheese, yogurt, and eggs. **Cut back on fatty or fried foods.** They are like “lead magnets.”
 - Try to get children to eat 3 “real meals” a day
 - Give your child fruit and vegetables instead of candy as “special treats.”
 - Do not keep food in opened cans. Can rims may have lead in them.
6. **Run water from your cold water faucet for about 1 minute** or until it feels cold before using it. You’re not wasting water – you’re flushing lead out!
7. **Keep your child away from loose, chipping, or peeling paint.** Check places where your child spends time (your home, the babysitter’s home, relatives’ homes, daycare centers) for cracked or peeling paint. Call your local health department for advice if you find chipping or peeling paint. They are on your side and want to help you keep your child healthy, too.
8. **Before you start to remodel or rebuild or repair any part of your home, call your local health department for advice.** You don’t want to make the paint crack or peel, because there might be lead in it. The Hunterdon County Department of Health’s number is (908) 788-1351.

*** Do not let children visit or stay in places where lead paint is being removed!**

* When lead paint is being removed from your home or a place you go to often, **follow the safety rules** the health department tells you about.

Pregnant or breast-feeding? Stay out of buildings where lead paint is being removed. Keep your pets out, too. Lead is not healthy for any body!

New Jersey Physician Lead Advisory Committee

Dear Parent,

In 1995, New Jersey passed a new law to protect children from the dangers of lead poisoning.

This law requires physicians and other health care providers to screen all children less than 6 years of age with a blood lead test.

If your child is under 6 years of age, he/she needs to be tested at 12 months of age and again at 24 months of age.

Children aged 3-5 years who have never been tested also should be screened at least once.

If at any time you and your family are exposed to lead, get tested no matter how old you are.

Lead poisoning is a serious health problem. The most common sources of lead are peeling and chipping paint and dust. Lead-paint chips and dust with lead in it are found in many old apartments and houses in New Jersey. Infants and toddlers, as part of growing up, put things in their mouths to learn how they taste. This is how many children get lead poisoned.

Lead can hurt your child's growing brain and nervous system. Children with lead poisoning may have learning and behavior problems that show up when they go to school.

Children with too much lead may not look or act or feel sick. **A blood lead test is the only way you can find out if your child is lead poisoned.**

If your child has not been screened for lead, *please* call your child's doctor and make an appointment for a blood lead test as soon as possible.

Please read the information sheet that comes with this letter. It will tell you more about the sources of lead and how to protect your child from getting lead poisoned.

Thank you very much for taking the time to learn about lead poisoning.

If you have any questions about lead, please talk with your child's doctor or nurse. They want to help you and keep your child healthy!

New Jersey Physician Lead Advisory Committee

SOURCES OF LEAD

Attention Parents:

The most common sources of lead are:

Peeling or chipping lead paint
Lead dust found in old houses and apartments
(old = built before 1960)

Lead dust can also be found:

- in old homes that are being repaired or remodeled
- on non-glossy vinyl miniblinds NOT made in the USA
- on the clothing and shoes of adults who work in jobs or have hobbies that use lead

Other sources of lead are:

SOIL Soil may have lead in it from paint that came off old houses. Also, until the 1980's, lead was put in gasoline to make cars run more smoothly. The lead came out the exhaust pipe of the car into the air and landed on and stayed in the ground.

WATER Drinking water may have lead in it if the pipes it travels through are old, are held together with lead, or are made with lead.

FOOD Food may have lead in it if the food was stored in cans sealed with lead, or if it was kept in pottery, ceramic, or crystal containers made with lead.

FOLK MEDICINE "Greta," "Azarcon" and some other home remedies have lead in them.

COSMETICS & HAIR DYES Some make-up and hair coloring ingredients may have lead in them. Read the labels carefully.

TOYS & FURNITURE If they are old or if they were made outside the USA, some toys and furniture may be painted with lead paint. Read the label carefully before you buy anything.