

## Children at Risk

Children 6 and younger are at the highest risk for lead poisoning because:

- Their hand-to-mouth activity brings objects contaminated with lead directly into their body.
- Children play around window sills, run their hands along walls and doorways that may have lead-based paint.
- Lead affects their growth and development.
- Lead can cause learning, behavior and severe health problems in children.
- Even small amounts of lead can harm children.

## Adults at Risk

Adults at risk include people who remodel homes built before the 1980s, painters, sandblasters and their families.



## Health Risks

People with high levels of lead in their body often do not appear to be sick.

- Symptoms may include:
  - lack of attention
  - growth delays
  - learning difficulties
  - hyperactivity
  - lack of coordination
  - irritability
  - speech difficulties
  - loss of appetite
  - hearing problems
  - constipation
  - lack of energy
  - change in sleep patterns



- Advanced symptoms include:
  - kidney problems
  - damage to reproductive organs
  - high blood pressure
  - brain damage
- Death can result in severe cases if not treated.
- It is important to note that symptoms may appear for other reasons.

## Testing

A blood test is the only accurate way to determine if a person has lead poisoning.

- Children six years and younger should be tested on a yearly basis if they:
  - live or play in housing built before the 1980s
  - live with a person who is exposed to lead at work or from a hobby
  - live or play around an older home being remodeled
- Adults should be tested if they:
  - are remodeling or stripping paint in a house built before the 1980s
  - are exposed to lead at work or through a hobby such as stained glass crafts or using lead sinkers when fishing



## Prevention and Treatment

Prevention is the best solution for lead poisoning.

- Finding and removing lead sources are the most effective solutions for lead poisoning.
- A balanced diet high in calcium, iron and vitamin C is important in helping the body absorb less lead. Recommended foods include:

### Calcium-rich foods:

- milk
- yogurt
- low-fat cheese
- tofu
- low-fat cottage cheese

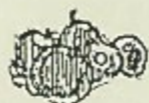
### Vitamin C-rich foods:

- oranges
- grapefruit
- broccoli
- dark green, leafy vegetables
- potatoes cooked in the skin

### Iron-rich foods:

- raisins
- lean red meat
- low-fat pork
- dried beans/peas
- iron fortified cereal
- iron fortified infant formula

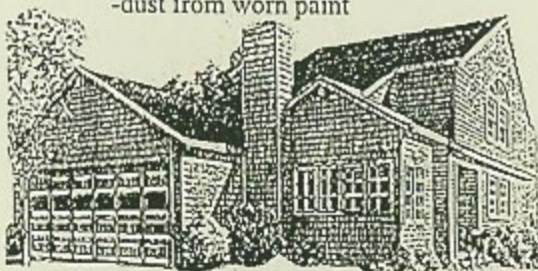
- Avoid foods high in fats and oils because they help the body absorb lead more easily.
- There is a medical treatment for lead-poisoning, but it is used only in severe cases.



## Sources of lead

It is common to have more than one source of lead in a lead-poisoning case.

- Lead-based paint is the number one source. It may be found in:
  - homes build before the 1980s
  - older and/or imported toys
  - older furniture particularly painted cribs and high chairs
  - dust from worn paint



- Soil may be contaminated with lead-based paint chips and dust.
- Water can be contaminated by lead water pipes, soldering or faucets made of brass.
- Keys can be a source of lead poisoning because some are made of brass.
- People who are exposed to lead at work bring it home on their clothes and bodies.
- Folk medicines may contain lead
- Pottery with a leaded glaze will cause lead poisoning if used for food service.

# LEARNING ABOUT LEAD POISONING



## Definition

Lead poisoning is a disease that occurs when a large dose of lead or continuous small amounts of lead are ingested or inhaled.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

Waushara County Health Department

(920) 787-6590

Green Lake Co. Health Department

(920) 294-4070

Marquette Co. Health Department

(608) 297-9116