

How can my child get lead poisoning?

Your child can get lead poisoning by:

- Getting lead dust from old paint on hands or toys and putting hands into the mouth.
- Breathing in lead dust from old paint.
- Eating chips of old paint or dirt that contains lead.
- Drinking water from old lead pipes.

Very high levels of lead in the body may cause many long-term problems. These include:

- Kidney problems**
- Developmental Delays**
- Anemia**
- Problems Growing**
- Hearing loss**
- Seizures and/or coma**

High lead levels in a child's blood may not be noticed until the child starts school. Then, some children are found to have learning and behavior problems.

Where Can Lead Be Found?

Lead is found in:



- **Dust and paint chips from old paint**
- **Homes built before 1950, especially those in need of repair.**
- **Soil that has lead in it**
- **Hobby materials such as stained glass, paints, solders, fishing weights, and buckshot**
- **Home remedies like asarco, greta, pay, loah.**



- **Dust brought home on the clothing of family members with jobs that use lead, such as making batteries or smelting companies—again, can't you find more modern examples?**
- **Food stored in some ceramic dishes (especially dishes made outside the USA.**
- **Painted toys and antique furniture such as cribs.**
- **Tap water in homes that have lead pipes.**
- **Mini-blinds made outside the United States before July 1996.**



How can I protect my child from getting lead poisoning?

Many ways are simple and low-cost:

- Find and fix peeling paint in your home and other places where children spend a lot of time.
- Have children wash their hands often, especially before eating and after playing outside or on the floor.
- Wash toys, pacifiers and other items that children put in their mouths.
- Clean floors and window sills with a damp mop and detergent.
- Never mix baby formula using hot water.

- Use *only* cold water for drinking, making beverages and cooking.
- Before drinking, run the faucet until the water feels cold to the touch.
- If you fix up your home, be sure any new paint does not contain lead.
- If you work with lead at your job, shower and remove work clothes at the job. Wash work clothes separately from the family laundry.
- Give children a healthy diet rich in calcium and iron and low in fat.. Calcium and iron reduce the amount of lead absorbed by the body.

Should My Child Be tested for Lead?

- Every child should have a lead test when she or he is one year old and again at age two.
- Doctors must assess children aged 6 months to 6 years for exposure to lead during routine well-child visits. If the child has not had routine visits, the doctor should check once each year.



Is my child at risk for lead poisoning?

If you can answer "yes" to any of the following questions, your child may be at risk.

- Does your child live in or visit a house built before 1978 that has been remodeled in the last 6 months? Are there any plans to remodel?
- Does your child have a brother, sister, or playmate who is being treated for lead poisoning?
- Does your child live with an adult whose job or hobby involves exposure to lead?
- Does your child live within one block of a major highway or busy street?
- Do you use hot tap water for cooking or drinking?
- Has your child ever been given home remedies (asarco, greta, pay, loah)?
- Has your child lived outside the United States?
- Does your family use pottery or ceramics for cooking, eating, or drinking?

Treatment

If your child has high levels of lead in their blood he or she may need to take a medicine that helps the body get rid of it. This treatment is often done in the hospital. It is a series of shots. Some children

need more than one type of treatment and several months of close follow-up. If the damage is severe; the child may need special schooling and therapy.

Remember

- The only way to know for sure if your child has been exposed to lead is to have the child's doctor test his or her blood.
- Talk to your child's doctor about testing your child for lead levels, especially if your child is under 3 years old,.

For more information on Lead Screening call:

New York City Department of Health at:

212- BAN LEAD (226-5323)

MetroPlus Health Plan Care Manager at:

1-800579-9798

*The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.
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**MetroPlus Health Plan
160 Water Street, New York, NY 10038**

**Member: For more information:
1-800-303-9626**

**For Information About MetroPlus Health Plan:
1-800-475-METRO**

Lead Screening for Children

