

LEAD POISONING

LEAD AND CHILDREN

What Do Blood Lead Levels Mean for Your Child's Health

Is My Child At Risk For Lead Poisoning?

The only way to know if your child is poisoned is to get a blood lead test. All NH children are to be tested for lead at ages one and two. Children can be exposed to lead when:

- Living in or visiting a home built before 1978 with lead hazards or ongoing or recent repairs
- Attending a child care center built before 1978 with lead hazards or ongoing or recent repairs
- Spending time with a sibling, relative, or playmate with lead poisoning
- Spending time with an adult who works with lead in a job or hobby (ex. fishing, painting, auto repair)
- Eating or drinking food stored in glazed pottery or leaded crystal
- Using traditional home remedies & imported products (ex. Kohl, Kajal, Surma, Azarcon, Alarcon, Greta, Pay-loo-ah)
- Eating imported ground spices.
- Swallowing or mouthing toys, small metal charms, keys, trinkets & jewelry
- Playing in contaminated soil

SYMPTOMS OF LEAD POISONING

Most children with lead poisoning **DO NOT** look sick.

NH children are to be tested at age 1 yr. and *again* at age 2 yrs.

The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to get tested.

Some children might experience:

- Stomachaches, headaches, trouble paying attention, developmental delays, behavior issues, problems with eating and sleeping and speech/language delays.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Lead can affect all parts of the body and mind



- Poor school performance & lower test scores
- Hearing & speech problems
- Slowed growth & development
- Hyperactivity & aggression problems
- Damage to the brain, kidneys & nerves



PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

Remove the lead source and look out for lead hazards

Lead poisoning occurs when children ingest or inhale lead

- Have your home tested for lead (test soil and water, too)
- Use a HEPA vacuum and disposable rags to clean lead dust
- Keep children away from lead paint & dust
- Wash hands, toys & pacifiers often
- Avoid imported foods, candies, and ground spices
- Don't allow children to mouth metal charms, keys, trinkets & jewelry—they may contain lead (brass, bronze, pewter)

Provide early intervention & stimulation

- Stimulate learning by enrolling children in early childhood education programs such as Head Start, child care, preschool, and play groups
- Read to & play games with your child



If you live in a rental property...

- Inform your landlord if your child has an elevated blood lead
- Do not remove lead on your own, notify your landlord instead
- Remember, you can NOT be evicted for having a lead-poisoned child

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Any amount of lead is dangerous and can cause health and behavioral problems at all ages. A blood test is the only way to tell if your child has lead poisoning. All children should be tested at 1 & 2 years old. A test can be done in the doctor's office with a capillary 'finger-stick' blood sample. Depending upon test results, it may need a follow up test with venous blood from arm. **Confirm a capillary blood lead test with a venous test based on schedule below:**

Blood Lead Level (micrograms/deciliter)	Capillary or Venous	When to Retest	What can I do to help?
<5	C	Not necessary unless other risk factors. Retest children < 12 months old in 3-6 months as blood lead level may increase with mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your child's doctor • Feed child foods high in Calcium, Iron & Vitamin C • Wash hands frequently • Clean floor and window sills and wells with disposable wipes or wet mop • Look out for "Take-Home" lead and other sources
	V		
5 - 9	C	Confirm within 1 month.	Continue with above AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control known lead hazards • Keep up good nutrition (Calcium, Iron & Vitamin C) • Follow up by NH HHLPPP will provide education, case management, and environmental assessment
	V		
10 - 19	C	Confirm within 2 weeks	Continue with above AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test siblings younger than 6 years old • Ensure child has proper diet • Consider developmental evaluation if elevated blood lead levels persist
	V	Retest within 3 months	
20-44	C	Confirm within 1 week	Continue with above AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove child from lead hazards
	V	Retest every 1-2 months until <20 mcg/dL	
45 - 64	C	Confirm within 48 hours.	Continue with above AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHILD NEEDS IMMEDIATE TREATMENT • Chelation may be necessary • When possible, child should return to a lead safe environment
	V	Seek immediate medical attention and test weekly afterwards	
≥ 65	C	Confirm IMMEDIATELY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAKE CHILD TO HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT
	V	Medical emergency, chelation treatment	

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