

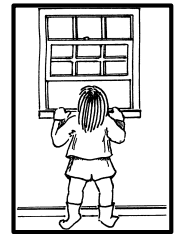
# TWELVE LEAD HAZARDS - EXPLANATION OF HAZARDS LISTED

The population most at risk of lead exposure is children under 6 years of age.

1. **Lead-Based Paint:** Lead-based paint was banned for housing in the USA in 1978 and manufacturers began reducing the lead concentrations in the two decades prior to the ban due to changes for HUD housing in 1960. The likelihood of a house containing lead-based paint has been estimated as a curve with these markers:
  - Prior to 1940: 98% - this paint could be up to 50% lead by weight
  - 1940 to 1960: 70% - the amount of lead started to decline, but is still significant
  - 1960 to 1978: 20% - realizing a ban was likely, the amount of lead sharply declined
  - After 1978: It is unlikely to find significant levels unless paint not intended for housing was used.

Most cases of the lead exposure in city neighborhoods in Niagara County are because of deteriorating housing stock. If a home with lead-based paint is in poor repair or when painted surfaces are disturbed during renovation and repair, lead dust can be released into the home causing a lead hazard, especially for children less than 7 years of age and pregnant women. The age of a house, which often indicates the presence of lead-based paint and the condition of the house are two of the major risk factors considered for childhood lead exposure.

2. **Dirty/Dusty Floors/Surfaces:** Toddlers spend a lot of time every day in contact with hard surfaces or carpeted floors and transfer contaminated leaded dust to their mouths with normal hand-to-mouth activity. Household dust and dirt found on the floors or trapped in carpeting may contain lead from lead-based paint in poor condition, dust generated during home renovation or repair or tracked in soil contaminated by exterior paint/past leaded gasoline fumes exposure or industrial sources.
3. **High Soil Lead:** Playing in contaminated areas around demolition or factory areas contributes to adverse lead exposure in children. In addition, the soil found around the foundation of older homes can often test very high for lead from prior contamination by lead-based paint scraped off during renovation, repainting/repair, or years of rain run-off. Do not allow children to play in this “drip zone” and do not plant vegetable gardens there either. Kicking shoes off at the door will also limit lead dust tracked in.
4. **Windows and Porches:** Lead-based paint in poor condition is often found in window wells of older houses as well as on older painted porches that are often used as play areas in a home. Toddlers may either touch or mouth areas that have accumulated significant levels of lead dust while pursuing their love of looking out of windows. Lead dust and paint chips are more likely to be found in window well troughs because of the stress to the old paint from friction (opening and closing window) and weather changes. Never vacuum up any paint chips found, but remove with wet paper towel instead.

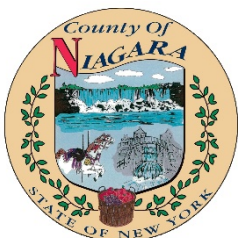


5. **Jewelry Made of Metal:** 2006 saw the death of a 4-year-old in Minnesota who swallowed a metal charm included with a pair of shoes. Children’s jewelry – both cheaper costume items and expensive designer brands – as well as metal bookmarks, ornaments, hair clips and many other items have been recalled through the years. For more information, go to the Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) or contact Niagara County Department of Health (NCDOH).
6. **Brass Keys Mouthed by Children:** Combination metals often contain varying amounts of lead. The common practice of letting children mouth keys should be discouraged. This is also true of metal or antique jewelry.
7. **Contaminated Candy:** Imported candy (a great reference is the 2004 Orange County Register special report called “Toxic Treats” – online at <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/candy-219217-lead-truck.html>).

8. **Some spices and traditional folk medicines** or products routinely imported from outside of the USA may also present a risk of lead exposure. In 2016, several brands of Turmeric spices were recalled due to elevated lead levels. In 2005, the Iowa Department of Public Health identified a stomach remedy from Mexico that tested over 40% lead. Parents should be aware that some items from their country of origin might not be safe for use.
9. **Glazes on Pottery:** While it is very hard to know whether individual items of pottery or glazed ceramics are “lead safe” without sending the item for bioavailability testing, we urge people to read package labels, avoid homemade items for food or beverage use and discontinue using chipped, cracked or deteriorated dishware for food preparation, serving or storage. Families should also avoid using lead crystal, pewter or antique dishware unless they know it is lead safe.
10. **Lead Dust on Daddy or any adult child comes in contact with:** Lead dust can contaminate clothing, vehicles and work items during an occupation such as construction/renovation/demolition, automotive battery and radiator repair, plumbing, welding, shooting firearms/gun ranges, electronics repair, or any manufacturing using lead and be transferred to children at the end of the day. Adults need to be aware of their possible exposure on the job and take steps to protect their health and the health of their family from “take home lead”. Changing clothing, washing up, and kicking shoes off at the door is important before playing or having contact with younger children.
11. **Lead in Vinyl and Plastics:** The manufacturing process for many vinyl and plastics includes lead, which can remain in varying amounts in the final product. To be a hazard, the lead needs a way to leach out of the product and into a person. Two common items have been vinyl mini-blinds and electrical wiring covered in vinyl or plastic, such as Christmas lights. Brightly colored toys can also be a problem and decorative items such as bobble-head dolls may have lead in the plastic or in the paint used on the surface. Children should never chew on items not designated for mouthing. Consumers should also read package labels to choose products that claim to meet US safety standards as a minimum precaution.
12. **Lead on Antique Items:** Unfortunately, many items handed down from relatives or found at garage and estate sales have lead in the surface paint or decorative trim. This can include cribs, highchairs, dishware, trunks, dollhouses, children’s furniture, and other home decorating touches. Families with small children who are likely to touch and mouth these items should choose to keep them out of reach or discard them to protect their family from lead exposure unless they are sure the items are lead safe or children are past the mouthing stage.

### **General Guidelines for Families to Follow to Stay Lead Safe**

- Get your child tested – we recommend all children be tested at least at 1 and again at 2 years of age and then consider testing at 3, 4 and 5 year olds if lead hazards are possibly present.
- Keep it clean – ordinary dust and dirt may contain lead. Damp mop and damp dust regularly, especially around windows cleaning inner ledge before cleaning trough well. Never vacuum up paint chips.
- Reduce the risk from lead paint – look for possible lead hazards and keep your child away from chipping, peeling or chalking surfaces and do not allow a child to mouth or chew a painted surface.
- Work Lead Safe – don’t try to do renovations or repair work in a home built prior to 1978 until you learn how to do it safely or hire someone trained to work lead safe.
- Do not bring lead dust into your home from work, a hobby or your yard. Kick shoes off at door.
- Eat right with a diet higher in iron and vitamin C.
- Good handwashing using friction of rubbing hands together with soap & water before eating.



**For more information, contact the**

**Niagara County Department of Health  
Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

**716-278-1900**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.