

Protect Your Children from the Risk of Lead Poisoning

Young children are especially more vulnerable to lead's toxic effects, including: lowering intelligence, difficulty concentrating, learning disabilities, speech, and hearing problems, behavior issues, as well as possibly growth, bone, and nervous system damage. Lead poisoning occurs without any obvious symptoms until later in life. Below are some simple measures you can take to help protect and ensure good health for your child's future:

****Please get your child tested** (WIC only tests hemoglobin, NOT lead). It is important to take your child for scheduled check-ups at your pediatrician's office. Your child should at least be tested at ages one and two. Then if there are any risk factors or concerns, testing should continue once a year until your child turns six. If your child has a lead level of 5 to 9, repeat test within six months.

No Safe Lead Level in Children Has Been Identified

**** Establish routine hand-washing** with soap, water, & the friction of rubbing hands together each time (hand sanitizer does nothing to remove lead dust):

- * after playing outside,
- * before eating (whether a snack or a meal),
- * before naptime and bedtime, and
- * more often if your child likes to put his/her hands in their mouth

**** A healthy low-fat diet** throughout the day to include high amounts of

- * **Iron** (meats, beans, nuts if not allergic, dried fruits, leafy greens, and iron-fortified cereals)
- * **Vitamin C** (fruit, particularly citrus fruits, melon, broccoli, tomatoes, and peppers)

**** If Older Plumbing** in your home, **use only cold water** from your tap for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. Allow the water to run **at least one minute** when it has not been run in a few hours. Boiling water does not remove lead.

**** Good housekeeping** with weekly **damp dusting and damp mopping**.

If you live in an older home, your child could be exposed to leaded dust.

A young child need only absorb a teaspoon worth of leaded dust in order to become lead poisoned. **Never vacuum up paint chips**. If you see paint chips around, you should pick them up with a wet paper towel.

**** Renovate Right** to protect your family and keep them safe when repairing or updating your home. Keep children away from paint dust areas. Use moist method to remove old paint. If the outside of your older home at one point was painted, don't grow vegetables or allow your children to play in the dirt closest to the house due to contamination from rain run-off in the "drip zone".

Feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns.

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

(716) 278-1900



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.