

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT LEAD



What is lead?

Lead is a metal that occurs naturally in the earth's crust. Lead is a poison. Because it is a major health risk, lead has been removed from paint and gasoline.

Where is lead found?

Although federal and state regulatory standards have helped reduce lead in our environment, lead can be found in many places - the air, soil, water, and our homes. Much of our exposure to lead is due to industrial sources and contaminated sites.

What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning is a dangerous condition caused by swallowing, touching, or inhaling lead.

Who is at risk for lead poisoning?

Young children are most at risk for lead poisoning because their bodies absorb more lead than adults and their brains and nervous systems are still developing. However, adults can also get lead poisoning. Pregnant women can who have lead in their blood can pass it on to their babies.

How do I know if my child or I have been exposed to lead?

Talk to a healthcare provider. A simple blood test is the most common way to check you or your child for lead exposure. There is no safe blood lead level for children.

What are the health effects of lead?

Lead causes a number of serious health problems for children - behavior and learning problems, lower IQ and hyperactivity, and slowed growth. Pregnant women with lead in their bodies can be at risk for miscarriage. Adults can suffer from high blood pressure and reproductive problems.

How can I protect my family from lead poisoning?

You can reduce you and your child's risk of lead exposure by:

- Getting your home checked for hazards like lead-based paint
- Asking your local water authority to check if there is lead in your tap water
- Hiring lead-certified professionals for house repairs
- Cleaning your floors and windowsills regularly using wet methods
- Washing toys, bottles, and pacifiers often
- Teaching your children to wipe their shoes and wash their hands after playing outdoors
- Making sure your family eats nutritious meals that are high in iron and calcium

FIND MORE INFORMATION



HAMILTON COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

epa.gov/lead
cdc.gov/nceh/lead