

Protect Your Child from Lead



Lead can hurt your child.

Lead poisoning can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention, and behave. Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick.

Take these steps to keep your family safe from lead.

Lead Inside and Outside Your Home

Keep lead dust and dirt from spreading in the house by wet washing surfaces like windowsills and floors often and removing shoes before entering your home.



Keep furniture away from paint that is chipped or peeling. Move cribs, playpens, beds, and high chairs away from damaged paint. This helps keep lead in paint chips and dust away from your child.

Never sand, dry scrape, power wash, or sandblast paint unless it has been tested and does not have lead in it. The use of lead-based paint was not banned until 1978.



Lead can get into your water from lead-lined or galvanized pipes. To reduce risk of lead in water, let water run until it feels cold before using it for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used). If water needs to be heated, use cold tap water and heat it on the stove or in a microwave.



Lead air emissions from sources like leaded aviation gas, factories, and the past use of lead in gasoline may be in the air or dirt around your home.

Consider using air purifiers with a HEPA filter. Cover bare dirt outside where your child plays with grass or other plants, bark, gravel, or concrete. This keeps lead in the dirt away from your child.



If you work with lead, change out of work clothes and shoes, and wash up or shower before getting in a car or going home.

Lead is in many workplaces:

- Painting and remodeling
- Radiator repair
- Battery recycling
- Shooting ranges



Ask your employer if you work with lead. Children can be poisoned from lead dust brought home on skin, hair, clothes and shoes, and in the car.

Lead in Things You Buy and Use

Avoid using water crocks or dishes and pots that are worn or antique, from a discount or flea market, made of crystal, handmade, or made outside the USA unless they have been tested and don't have lead.



Keep jewelry away from children. Some jewelry has lead. Even items marked "Lead Free" can have lead in them.

Talk to your doctor before using imported products that can have lead in them such as:

- **Home remedies:** brightly colored powders for stomachache or other illnesses
- **Make-up and ceremonial powders:** Kohl, Khali, Surma, or Sindoor
- **Food or spices:** like chapulines or turmeric

These items have lead in them — keep them away from your child:

- Lead fishing sinkers
- Lead bullets
- Lead solder



Taking Care of Your Child

Ask your child's doctor for a blood lead test at one and two years old if your child is in a program such as Medi-Cal, WIC¹, Head Start, or other similar programs. If your child is not in one of these programs, ask your child's doctor about their risk of lead exposure.



Do not let your child chew on painted surfaces or eat paint chips. Some old paint has lead in it. When paint gets old, it breaks down into dust. This dust spreads all around your home.

¹WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

Wash your child's hands and toys often. Always wash hands before eating and sleeping. Lead dust and dirt can stick to hands and toys that children put in their mouths.



Feed your child healthy meals and snacks every day. Make sure to give your child fruit and vegetables with every meal, and foods that have:

- **Calcium:** Milk, yogurt, cheese, soy milk, spinach, corn tortillas
- **Iron:** Beef, chicken, eggs, turkey, dried beans, iron-fortified multi-grain cereals, tofu, collards, kale, mustard greens
- **Vitamin C:** Oranges, tomatoes, limes, bell peppers, berries, papaya, broccoli



Calcium, iron, and vitamin C help keep lead from hurting your child.

For more information, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB or contact:

