POTENTIAL SOURCES OF LEAD

- Old paint, especially if it is chipped or peeling or if the home has been recently repaired or remodeled
- House dust
- Soil
- Some imported dishes, pots and water crocks. Some older dishware, especially if it is cracked, chipped, or worn
- Work clothes and shoes worn if working with lead
- Some food, candies and spices from other countries
- Some jewelry, toys, and other consumer products
- Some traditional home remedies and traditional make-up
- Lead fishing weights and lead bullets
- Water, especially if plumbing materials contain lead

SYMPTOMS OF LEAD EXPOSURE

Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. Symptoms, if any, may be confused with common childhood complaints, such as stomachache, crankiness, headaches, or loss of appetite.



OPTIONS FOR LEAD TESTING



A blood lead test is free if you have Medi-Cal or if you are in the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP). Children on Medi-Cal, CHDP, Head Start, WIC, or at risk for lead poisoning, should be tested at age 1 and 2. Health insurance plans will also pay for this test. Ask your child's doctor about blood lead testing.

For more information, go to the California Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch's website at www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb, or call them at (510) 620-5600.

(The information and images found on this publication are adapted from the California Department of Public Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.)

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EFFECTS OF LEAD EXPOSURE

Children 1-6 years old are the most at risk for lead poisoning.

- Lead poisoning can harm a child's nervous system and brain when they are still forming, causing learning and behavior problems that may last a lifetime.
- Lead can lead to a low blood count (anemia).
- Even small amounts of lead in the body can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention, and succeed in school.
- Higher amounts of lead exposure can damage the nervous system, kidneys, and other major organs. Very high exposure can lead to seizures or death.

LEAD POISONING FACTS

- Buildup of lead in the body is referred to as lead poisoning.
- Lead is a naturally occurring metal that has been used in many products and is harmful to the human body.
- There is no known safe level of lead in the body.
- Small amounts of lead in the body can cause lifelong learning and behavior problems.
- Lead poisoning is one of the most common environmental illnesses in California children.
- The United States has taken many steps to remove sources of lead, but lead is still around us.

IN THE US:

- Lead in house paint was severely reduced in 1978.
- Lead solder in food cans was banned in the 1980s.
- Lead in gasoline was removed in the early 1990s.



LEAD IN TAP WATER

The only way to know if tap water has lead is to have it tested.



Tap water is more likely to have lead if:

- Plumbing materials, including fixtures, solder (used for joining metals), or service lines have lead in them;
- Water does not come from a public water system (e.g., a private well).

To reduce any potential exposure to lead in tap water:

- **Flush the pipes in your home**
  Let water run at least 30 seconds before using it for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used). If water has not been used for 6 hours or longer, let water run until it feels cold (1 to 5 minutes.)*
- **Use only cold tap water for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used)**
  If water needs to be heated, use cold water and heat on stove or in microwave.
- **Care for your plumbing**
  Lead solder should not be used for plumbing work. Periodically remove faucet strainers and run water for 3-5 minutes.*
- **Filter your water-** Consider using a water filter certified to remove lead.

WARNING!



Some water crocks have lead. Do not give a child water from a water crock unless you know the crock does not have lead.

(*Water saving tip: Collect your running water and use it to water plants not intended for eating.)

For information on testing your water for lead, visit The Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov/lead/protect-your-family-exposures-lead or call (800) 426-4791.

You can also visit The California Department of Public Health's website at https://www.cdph.ca.gov.

