All Children in Chicago Are at Risk For Lead Poisoning

Let’s add lead poisoning prevention to your safety plan!

What is lead? It’s a metal that’s found in our environment and many products we use. It can be poisonous to people and animals.

What is lead poisoning? Lead poisoning happens when too much lead gets into the body, usually through breathing in lead dust or eating or drinking something contaminated by lead.

Is lead poisoning harmful? Yes, too much lead in the body can cause learning delays, behavioral issues, and other physical health problems.

There are no obvious symptoms of lead poisoning. Be sure to ask your child’s doctor to test!

Kids can be exposed to lead if:

- They chew or eat lead paint chips
- They breathe in dust from lead paint or touch it and put their hands in their mouths
- Lead is tracked into the home through dirt on shoes and clothing
- Eat food stored in dishes glazed with lead
- Put soil in their mouths that has lead dust from lead paint or leaded gas in it
- They interact with old or imported toys that have lead
- They eat candy or herbs that have been found to have lead
- They are around a caregiver who is regularly exposed to lead at work

Visit illinoisAAP.org/lead/ to learn more!
You Can’t See Lead, But You Can Detect It!

What happens if my child has higher levels of lead in their blood?
That’s when we’ll need to take action to limit their risk!

Here are the steps you can take:

1. **Make sure you get your child’s lab work completed!**
   There are additional blood tests your doctor will want to perform to make a treatment plan – be sure to follow up.

2. **Once their second test is confirmed, you will be assigned a nurse case manager to help with detection and treatment!**
   Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) will work with you to remove lead from your home to keep your children safe.

3. **Update your cleaning habits by incorporating new tasks like:**
   - Wiping down all window wells, windowsills, and areas around windows with a mixture of dishwasher detergent and clean warm water and then rinse with clean water.
   - Spray your floors with the same soap mixture, then sweep, and then mop with the same mixture. Rinse with warm water.
   - Clean all bed clothes, sheets, and pillowcases regularly.
   - Take off all shoes before entering the home.
   - Clean all toys regularly, especially if they’ve touched the floor.
   - Clean all dishes that have touched the floor before using them again.

What can we do to stop lead poisoning?

Ask your child’s doctor to test their lead levels!

- **Many private insurance policies cover the cost** of testing for lead in the blood. The cost of blood lead testing for children enrolled in Medicaid is covered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid services.

- **Lead testing is required** for enrollment in day care and school.

- **The good news** is you can ask your doctor to test your child’s lead levels on their next visit.

Help keep your child safe by:

- Asking your doctor to test your child’s lead levels! Getting their lab work done! Connect with the CDPH about a process to remove lead from your home.

**Important:**
If your child has a high lead level, a nurse case manager from CDPH will contact you to provide counseling and help.

**Questions?**
Call (312) 747-LEAD (312) 747-5323

Visit illinoisaap.org/lead/ to learn more!