

A Parent's Guide To
**LEAD POISONING
PREVENTION**

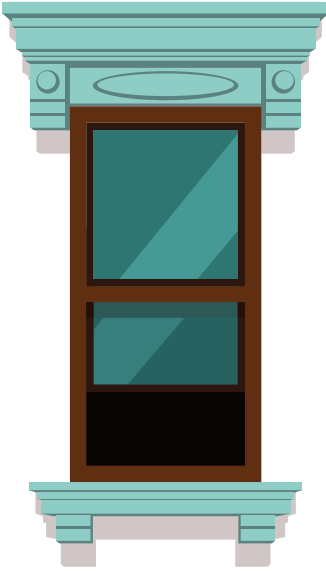


Contact the Lead Program 860.837.6500



CHC @ Connecticut
Children's





What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning is a serious problem. It happens when you eat things that contain lead. The lead gets into the blood and causes health problems.

Where does lead come from?

These are the two main places where lead is found...

Lead Dust

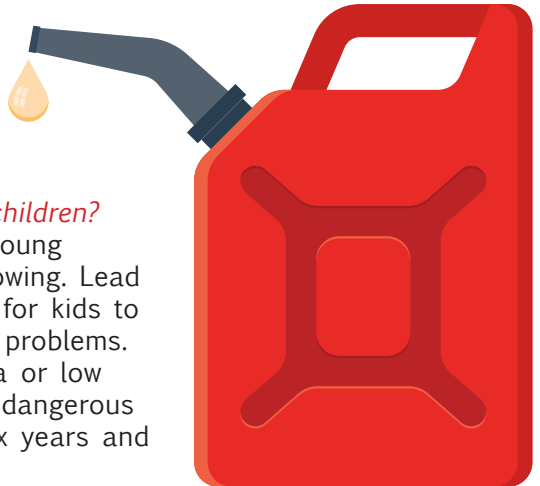
Lead was used in paint until 1978 and gasoline until 1995. *If your home was built before 1978, then there is probably lead paint in your home.* Lead paint on windows, doors, stairs and porches will chip and create dust. This dust has lead in

it. The dust is very small and hard to see. The dust will fall onto the floor and other surfaces like windowsills and tables and toys. Young children crawl and play on the floor and put their hands in their mouths a lot. This is how young children eat lead dust.

Lead Gasoline

Lead in gasoline created lead fumes. These fumes settled in our soil so there is lead in dirt. Young children should not play in the bare dirt because it can contain lead. It is safe for children to play on grass, mulch, sandboxes or asphalt.

Lead can also be found in water but this is rare. There are other things that contain lead, see page three for more information.



Why is lead dangerous for children?

Lead harms the brain and young children's brains are still growing. Lead poisoning can make it hard for kids to learn and cause behavioral problems. Lead can also cause anemia or low blood counts. Lead is most dangerous for children younger than six years and pregnant women.

How do I prevent my child from getting poisoned by lead?

You can keep your child safe from lead! *Here's what to do...*



Inside

If you live in an older home, here are things you can do: Look for cracked or peeling paint especially on your walls, stairs, windowsills, doorframes, and baseboards.

- If you see cracks: do not scrape the paint!
- You can paint over the area with any kind of paint.
- You will need to repaint whenever you see new cracks
- If you cannot paint the area you can:
 - Move furniture in front of the area so your child can't get to it
 - Cover the area with plastic sheets and duct tape

If the paint is in good condition (no cracks or peeling) – it will not cause any harm!

Even if there are no cracks on the paint, there can still be lead dust in the area.

The most important thing you can do is clean up the dust!

- Wet wipe or mop your floors every day
- Wet wipe surfaces like tables and counters every day
- Wet wipe your windowsills, door frames and baseboards every week.
- Wash your child's hands many times a day especially before eating – this keeps the lead dust off!
- Rinse off your child's toys every day to keep the dust off
- Never vacuum! This will spread the lead dust
- Don't dry dust – this will spread the lead dust too
- You can use warm water or any cleaner to wet wipe.

NEVER mix ammonia and bleach!

- Make sure you change the water after every room.
- Use paper towels or sponges to clean but you need to throw them out frequently



Other things you can do:

- Use cold water for cooking and drinking
- Run the water for two minutes before using it

Outside

Paint on porches, garages, barns, and outside stairs will crack and peel more because of rain and snow.

- Do not store your child's toys, bikes or shoes in these areas.
- Make sure everyone takes their shoes off before coming into the house
- Wipe your pet's paws off when they come inside

Bare dirt can have lead. Do not let your child play in open or bare dirt. Ground that is covered by grass, mulch or asphalt is safe to play on.



Special considerations



Besides paint and dirt, there are other things that can have lead.

Work Items

If an adult in your home works with:

- Cars
- Batteries
- Construction
- Glass making
- Pottery making
- Bullet making

Then they might be working with lead.

It is really important that adults change clothes and shower before coming home from work. If an adult in your home does any of these things as a hobby, they should set up outside the house and children should not go into the area!

Items from Other Countries

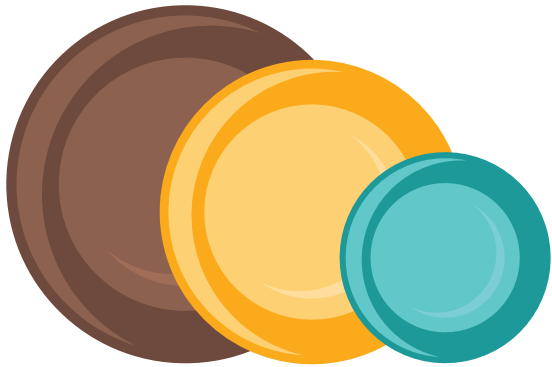
Many items from other countries contain lead.

Items from South and Central Asia that have lead include:

- Cultural remedies including most Ayurvedic medications
- Most Chinese herbs and powders
- Cultural powders and make-up like surma and kohl
- Spices like turmeric, curry and asafoetida
- Jewelry (all kinds)
- Some incense, ceremonial powders and incense holders
- Candies, pottery, plates and even pressure cookers can have lead

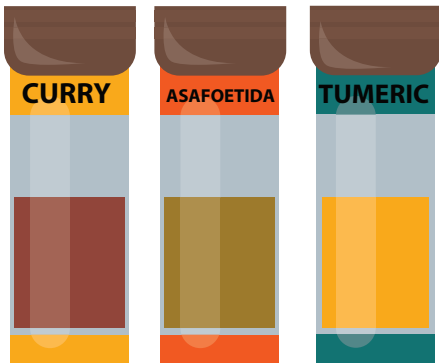
Items from South and Central America that have lead include:

- Pottery
- Dishes
- Cookware
- Spices
- Candies
- Jewelry
- Painted toys



If you have any of these items call your local health department. The health department can test these items for lead. *Do not use these items until they are tested.*

Do not accept gifts from other countries if they are used for cooking or serving food.



What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

Many children have no symptoms. Some children will have trouble with concentration and learning and constipation (hard stools), stomach pain or poor appetite.

How can I find out if my child has lead poisoning?

Every child in Connecticut should be checked for lead at one and two years old. Your doctor will check with a blood test.

What should I do if my child is poisoned?

Talk to your doctor immediately!

You can also call the **Hartford Regional Lead Treatment Center** at **860-547-0979**. We take care of children who have lead poisoning.



What can I do to help make my child better?

Repairs

If your child has lead poisoning, your local health department will come to your home to look for any sources of lead. They may test your paint, soil/dirt and water.

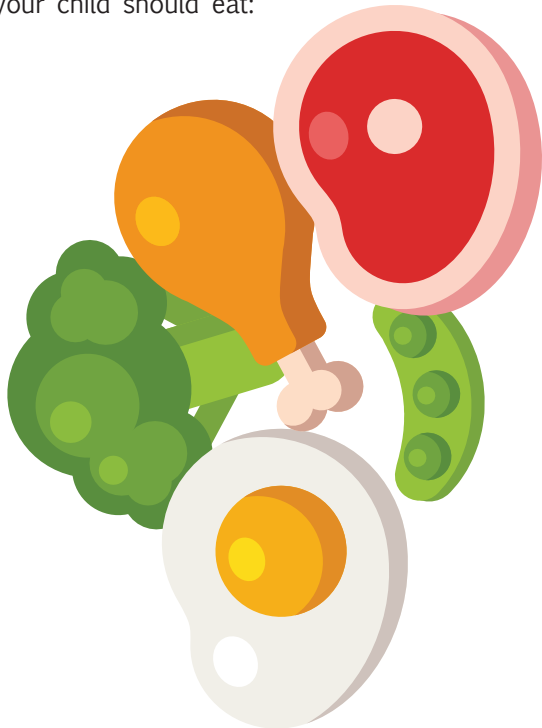
If you have any items from another country, make sure the health department looks at them. If your health department finds lead in your home: do not try and fix it yourself! Lead must be removed carefully and by professionals. Your local health department can recommend a professional. You can also get help from **CT Childrens' Healthy Homes Program** by calling **860.837.4241**.

Diet

Lead can cause anemia or low red blood counts. It is important that a child with lead poisoning eats food that has lots of iron.

Here are some foods your child should eat:

- Beef
- Chicken
- Pork
- Turkey
- Beans
- Eggs
- Watermelon
- Raisins
- Apricots
- Prunes
- Dates
- Peas
- Broccoli
- Kale
- Collard greens
- Spinach
- Turnips





Your doctor may give your child iron vitamins to take. Make sure you give the iron vitamins with orange juice. Never give iron vitamins at the same time as milk or dairy like yogurt or cheese.

Lead can also build up in bones so eating calcium is important too.

Here are some foods with calcium:

- Milk
- Cheese
- Ice cream
- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Salmon
- Oysters
- Sardines

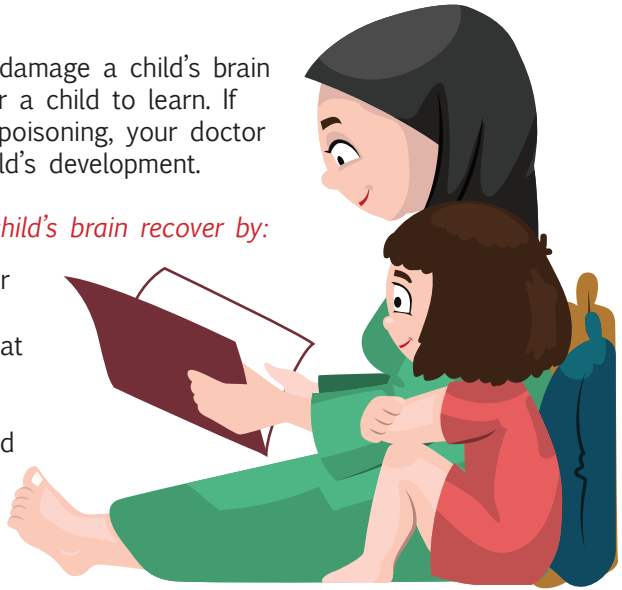
Development

Lead poisoning can damage a child's brain and make it hard for a child to learn. If your child has lead poisoning, your doctor will monitor your child's development.

You can help your child's brain recover by:

- Reading with your child everyday
- Playing games that focus on words, numbers learning
- Singing songs and telling stories

You can also get help and more information by calling:



Child Development Info line at 1-800-505-7000

They can help you find services for your child's development.

Our Center

Hartford Regional Lead Treatment Center specializes in caring for children with lead poisoning.

At the center we will follow your child until their lead level is normal. We will work with your health department and doctor. And we will work with you to make sure your child's growth and development are the best they can be.



CHC @ Connecticut Children's



If your child is poisoned, please call us at:

860-547-0979

We are located at:

76 New Britain Ave, Hartford, CT

Meet our staff:

Darlene Abbate, APRN

Patricia Garcia, MD

Jennifer Haile, MD

Alex Vega, Lead Program Coordinator

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary healthcare system committed to caring for uninsured and underserved populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 145,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Recognized as both a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and a Primary Care Medical Home by The Joint Commission, CHC delivers service in more than 200 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services.

For more information, visit

www.chc1.com