A THREAT TO EVERYONE . . . ESPECIALLY CHILDREN!

Lead is poisonous to the mind and body. It can damage health and cause problems that make it hard for your child to learn. It can even kill.

Babies exposed to lead before birth may be born too small or too early. The harm lead can cause them may never go away.

Lead comes from many sources. Of these, contaminated dust is the most common. Dust can come from lead-based paint, auto exhaust residues, or soil, or it can come from home remodeling. Other sources of lead include water that has traveled through old pipes containing lead solder.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF LEAD POISONING?

Symptoms in children
The signs and symptoms of lead poisoning in children may include:

- Irritability
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Sluggishness and fatigue
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Learning difficulties

Symptoms in newborns
Babies who are exposed to lead before birth may experience:

- Learning difficulties
- Slowed growth

A child can be hurt by lead but have no obvious symptoms.
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT LEAD POISONING?

Children may eat lead or breathe it in. Keep them from eating paint chips, dust, or dirt. Clean dust with a wet mop or wet cloth, not with a vacuum cleaner. If you work around lead, avoid bringing lead dust into your home.

Let water run one minute before drinking.

Keep areas where your children play clean. Have children wash their hands and toys often.

Have children play in a sandbox instead of in the dirt. For more information in EPA-Recognized Lead Kits, go to www2.epa.gov/lead/epa-recognition-lead-test-kits#recognized.

Healthy eating is important too, because it helps protect the body against lead’s effects. A lower-fat diet is best, especially one that includes foods with lots of calcium, iron, and zinc.

Have your child tested for lead. Every child under the age of six should be tested. All that is required is a simple blood test, which can be done at your doctor’s office or a local health clinic.

Pregnant women need to be tested, too. A woman with lead in her body may give it to her unborn child.

Take action in your home. To find out about having your house and water tested for lead, call your local health department, housing authority, or water company.

For Further Information

Get an expert to help if you have a problem with lead. For more information on lead poisoning, go to www2.epa.gov/lead/forms/lead-hotline-national-lead-information-center.

Call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-5323 for answers to specific questions about lead.

References:

1. Backgrounder: CDC Releases New Guidance on Lead Screening
2. EPA Recognition of Lead Test Kits
   www2.epa.gov/lead/epa-recognition-lead-test-kits#recognized
3. Lead Hotline - The National Lead Information Center
   www2.epa.gov/lead/forms/lead-hotline-national-lead-information-center

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