

Avoid hobbies involving lead, like making stained glass windows or fish sinkers.

#### ...from lead in the soil?

Don't let toddlers eat dirt.

Plant shrubs and grass near buildings where lead paint could have flaked off.

Keep children away from play areas near highways.

Make children wash their hands when they come inside.

#### ...from lead in the water?

Run the water for two minutes if it has been standing in the pipes for several hours.

Run the water until it gets cold (20-30 seconds) if the tap has been used recently.

Always use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.

Install a reverse-osmosis filter (approximately \$100).

## What should I feed my children to **protect** them from lead?

Children with adequate calcium and iron in their diets absorb lead less readily. After age two, children should avoid high-fat foods, which increase lead absorption. So, feed your children milk (skim after age two), green leafy vegetables, raisins, beans, and lean red meat.

## What should I do during home improvements?

Pregnant women and children should move elsewhere.

Whenever possible, cover lead-paint surfaces with wood or sheetrock.

Use a professional to remove materials covered with lead-based paint.

Use plastic to seal off the room being renovated.

Don't use a sander or heat gun to remove lead-based paint. Use a chemical stripper that doesn't contain methylene chloride.

Cleanup should begin with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) vacuum with a small pore filter.

Cleanup should end with a thorough washing using a tri-sodium phosphate detergent. Use two buckets for washing and rinsing.

None of the materials taken out of the house should be burned.

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# Get the Lead Out

**One in 20 preschoolers has lead poisoning.**

**Protect your children!**

## The Facts about Lead

Lead is a poison. In very small amounts, it affects the nervous system and brain. In slightly larger amounts, it affects red blood cells, kidneys, the reproductive system, and other organs.

In children under age six, very small amounts of lead can affect their development, attention span, and IQ. There is no known cure. Once it is in a child's brain, lead cannot be removed.

### How much lead is dangerous?

Swallowing a few grains a day—the dust on a window sill—is enough to hurt a child.

The official danger level is 10 micrograms per deciliter in a blood sample. The more lead in the blood, the more damaging it can be.

Young children take lead into their bodies 30 times better than adults do, and it does the most harm to them, especially between 15 months and four years of age.

### How can I tell if my children have lead poisoning?

Most children with lead poisoning show no symptoms. Some will complain of headaches or stomachaches or have nosebleeds.

The only way to be sure your children are safe is to have their blood tested.

### How do I get my children tested?

Call your family doctor or the county health department and ask about testing for lead poisoning. Request a venous blood-lead test, not just finger-prick test. In many areas, the health department will do this for free. Doctors will charge \$15 to \$40.

### Where is lead?

Lead may be in many places around your home. In the US, it was used in paint until 1978. So it can be in paint chips, the dust from painted surfaces that have rubbed together, or the dirt around a house where paint has peeled off.

Lead was used in older water pipes and, until recently, was in solder used to join copper water pipes. So, it can be in water that sits in your water pipes too long.

Lead is in imported pottery glazes, leaded crystal, and the solder in some cans. So, lead can be in food that sits too long in these containers.

Lead is in some items burned in incinerators. So, it is in the air and soil near many incinerators.

Lead is used in industries and hobbies. So, it can be on clothes worn home from work or spread in your home by your hobby.

Lead was in gasoline for many years, so it is in the soil near busy roads.

### How do I check my home for lead?

Have a professional test for lead. Ask the health department to test your home. If the health department can't, ask for a list of state-certified inspec-

tors and testing laboratories. Have tests done in four places:

**Painted surfaces**—Inspectors will either bring a portable detector that uses X-rays or will take paint samples and send them to a laboratory.

**Household dust**—Inspectors wet-wipe surfaces and send the samples to a lab for testing.

**Water**—Inspectors take two samples, one after the water has been in the pipes over night and another after the water has run for several minutes.

**Soil**—Inspectors take samples from around the house and from areas where soil is likely to be tracked into the house.

### How can I protect my children...

#### ...from lead dust in the house?

Damp-mop and damp-dust frequently with a detergent containing tri-sodium phosphate (TSP), such as powdered dishwashing detergent. Concentrate on places where painted surfaces rub together, including windows and doors.

Don't sand or scrape walls or woodwork covered with lead paint.

Wash children's hands frequently.

Give toddlers pacifiers and chew toys so they don't chew on woodwork or painted toys.

Put furniture in front of window sills that toddlers want to chew on.

Wash baby toys and pacifiers that fall on the ground.