

WHAT IS LEAD AND WHERE IS IT FOUND?



Lead is a natural element found in all parts of our environment—the air, soil, water, and inside our home. Products such as ceramics, pipes, paint, gasoline, batteries, ammunition, toys, and cosmetics may all contain lead.

What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning is when a person's health or body functions are negatively affected by lead that is found in what they eat, drink, touch, or breathe.

Lead poisoning is 100% preventable.

Many factors affect how people's body handles exposure to lead such as:

- Age
- Nutritional status
- Genetic makeup
- Length of exposure

Who is at risk for lead poisoning?

Children: Their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults, and their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects.

Adults, including Pregnant Women: Eating and drinking food or water containing lead or from dishes or glasses that contain lead. Spending time in areas where lead-based paint is deteriorating, or working in a job or engaging in hobbies where lead is used.

How do I know if I am at risk?

You may be at higher risk for lead poisoning if you are:

- Living in a home built before 1978 with paint that is chipping, peeling, or in poor condition
- A member of racial-ethnic minority groups, such as non-Hispanic African-Americans
- A recent immigrant from countries with lead in the environment
- A sibling, housemate, or playmate of someone with known lead exposure
- Around a parent or household member who is exposed to lead at work or through a hobby
- Exposed to lead through imported items
 - Food items such as candy and candy wrappers and spices
 - Toys, jewelry, lead-glazed antiques or handmade pottery or cookware
 - Traditional folk medicines and cosmetics, herbal and Ayurvedic remedies

How do I know if I have been exposed?

A blood lead test is the most common way to find out if you or your child have been exposed to lead.

Most children with detectable levels of lead in their blood have no obvious symptoms.

