

Know the Facts: Childhood Lead Poisoning

What is Lead Poisoning?



- Lead is a **toxic** metal used to make certain products and materials.
 - Lead was used in paint, glassware, gasoline, and some dishes before it was banned. It is still used in some products in the U.S. and other countries.
- Lead poisoning occurs when lead is **swallowed** or **breathed in**.
- Lead often enters children's bodies when they put their hands, toys, or other items covered with lead dust **into their mouths**.
- Exposure to even a **small amount** of lead can be harmful to children.

What are the Health Effects of Childhood Lead Poisoning?



Damage to the brain and nervous system



Slowed growth and development



Learning and behavioral problems



Hearing and speech problems

These are **ALL PERMANENT**. 😞

The good news is that lead exposure can be **PREVENTED!** 😊

Why are Young Children at Highest Risk of Being Poisoned by Lead?

Children under 6 are more susceptible to these health effects because their growing bodies absorb 4-5 times more lead than adults. **Children 9 months to 2 years of age** are at even higher risk because they frequently put their hands and objects into their mouths as part of their development.

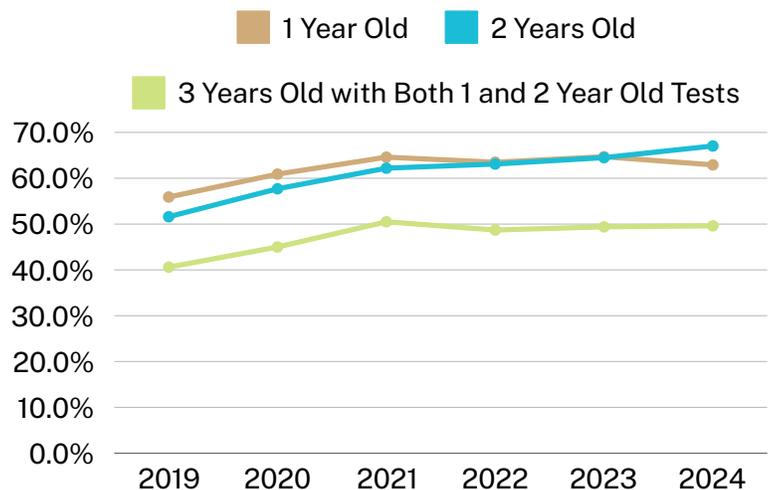
How Can You Tell If a Child has Lead Poisoning?

Lead poisoning is usually **not visible**. A **simple blood test** is the only way to know if a child is poisoned.

- All children should receive blood lead tests at **age 1** and again at **age 2**.
- Children should also be tested for lead whenever they may have been **exposed to lead** or **have a positive response** to any question in the [Does Your Child Need a Lead Test?](#) (Questionnaire)

- There is **no** safe blood lead level.
- NYS defines an elevated blood lead level as **5 µg/dL**.

Schuyler Lead Testing Rates in Schuyler County by Age



Who is at Highest Risk of Getting Poisoned by Lead?

- **Children living in homes built before 1978:**
 - Homes built before 1978 often have lead paint. Extremely small (mostly invisible) lead dust will be produced when old paint cracks and peels.
- **Children living in low-income households:**
 - Homes in low-income areas are more likely to contain lead-based paint and have lead-containing pipes, faucets, and plumbing fixtures.
- **Children who are immigrants, refugees, or adopted from other countries with less strict lead exposure regulations.**
- **Children living with adults who are exposed to lead in their workplace or from hobbies:**
 - Adults working in battery manufacturing or in renovation of older houses can bring lead dust home on their clothes, skin, hair, etc.
 - Some hobbies that work with lead-containing products (such as crafts using paints, glazes, solder, and bullets) can expose children to lead.

What are Common Items and Places that Can have Lead?



Old Paint



Lead Dust



Soil



Drinking Water



Candies and Juice



Toys and Jewelry



Some Types of Dishes



Cosmetics



Home Renovations



Folk Medicines

How Can Children be Protected from Lead?

- Wash children's hands and toys often.
- Wet-mop floors and wet-wipe window components frequently.
- Keep children away from peeling paint and broken plaster.
- Avoid having children play in bare soil.
- Avoid children using traditional folk medicines or eating candies imported from Mexico.
- Learn about lead-safe renovation practices.
- Don't bring lead home from work or hobbies.
- Check the lead recall list at <https://www.cpsc.gov/recalls>.

Eating a variety of these nutritious foods can help keep lead from being absorbed by the body

Calcium



Dairy product



Green vegetables

Vitamin C



Fruits



Peppers



Juice

Iron



Whole grain breads and cereals



Peanut butter



Red meat

Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/sources.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/populations.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/docs/all-children-can-be-exposed-to-lead.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/sources/consumer-products.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/sources/foods-cosmetics-medicines.htm>
<https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/lead/>
<https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/6670.pdf>

For more information about Lead Poisoning Prevention contact:
 Schuyler County Public Health
www.schuylercounty.us/publichealth
scph@schuylercountyny.gov
 607-535-8140



Public Health
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