

Poison Prevention Antidote

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Lead Poisoning Safety

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What is Lead?

Lead is a silvery-gray naturally occurring toxic metal element that is found in the Earth's crust. Lead doesn't have any use in our body so any amount found in the body is considered a poisoning from the environment.

Sources of Lead

Lead exposure can happen from many different sources. Children younger than 6 years old are more likely to be exposed because of their hand-to-mouth behavior.

- **Paints:** Homes built in the U.S. before 1978 may still contain lead paint and children can get exposed to lead paint by chewing on surfaces covered in it or by breathing in lead chips or dust.
- **Drinking water:** Pipes, faucets and plumbing fixtures may contain lead which can cause lead to be present in the drinking water when the metals on these fixtures wear away. Human skin does not absorb any lead that may be present in water so bathing and showering in water that may contain lead is safe.
- **Soil:** Lead can be present in soil from leaded gasoline, lead-based paint used on exteriors and industrial sources.
- **Consumer products:** Lead may be present in imported toys, antique toys, jewelry, or plastic toys.

Ways to Prevent Exposure

The most important way to protect lifelong good health from exposure to lead is through prevention. The main way to prevent lead exposure is through removing any lead hazards from your home before a child can become exposed.

- **Paints:** You can get a lead paint inspection to see if there is lead paint in your home. Have professionals remove any paint from homes built before 1978. Keep indoor areas clean from dust.
- **Drinking water:** Ask water providers if there are any lead service lines providing water to your home.
- **Soil:** Keep indoor areas clean from soil. Have children play in sandboxes and cover them when not in use so that cats don't use them as litter boxes.
- **Consumer products:** Avoid letting children play with recalled toys, toys made before 1978 and vintage and antique products. You can submit products that may have lead to a certified laboratory to test for presence of lead.

Health Effects of Lead

Most children with lead in their blood will have no obvious symptoms; however, exposures can lead to effects including damage to brain, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior problems or hearing and speech problems .

What To Do if Exposed

If you think you have been exposed it is important to get a blood test and any additional care from a provider as needed. A blood test is the best way to see if you or your child has been exposed.

The Poison Center specialists are available 24/7 for any questions at **1-800-222-1222**.

Upcoming Events

- 10/3-Excelsior FD open house
- 10/5-Brooklyn Park FD open house
- 10/8-Minnetonka FD open house



Have you heard?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that can kill a person in minutes. It is produced wherever fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned. If appliances that burn fuel are maintained and used properly, the amount of CO that is produced is harmless.

Early symptoms of CO poisoning can mimic the flu or other illnesses. Symptoms may include: fatigue, dizziness, headache, vomiting, difficulty breathing, confusion, and fainting. CO poisoning may lead to unconsciousness and death. It can be especially dangerous for pregnant women and their unborn babies, infants, the elderly, people with anemia, and individuals with a history of heart disease.

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1-800-222-1222 FOR EMERGENCIES OR QUESTIONS