

# LEAD POISONING

# LEAD AND CHILDREN

## What Do Blood Lead Levels Mean for Your Child's Health

### Is My Child At Risk For Lead Poisoning?

The only way to know if your child is poisoned is to get a blood lead test. It is recommended that children be tested for lead at ages one and two. Test your child if exposed to any of these risk factors:

- Living in or visiting a home built before 1978 with lead hazards or ongoing repairs
- Attending a daycare built before 1978 with lead hazards or ongoing repairs
- Spending time with a sibling, relative, or playmate with lead poisoning
- Spending time with an adult who works with lead in a job or hobby (ex. fishing, painting, auto repair)
- Eating or drinking food stored in glazed pottery or leaded crystal
- Using traditional home-remedies & imported products (ex. Kohl, Kajal, Surma, Azarcon, Alarcon, Greta, Pay-loo-ah)
- Swallowing or mouthing toys, small metal charms, keys, trinkets & jewelry
- Playing in contaminated soil

### SYMPTOMS OF LEAD POISONING

**Most children with lead poisoning DO NOT look sick.**

**NH children are to be tested at age 1 and again at age 2 yrs.**

**The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to get tested.**

Some children might experience:

- Stomach aches, headaches, trouble paying attention, developmental delays, behavior issues, problems with eating and sleeping and speech/language delays.

### LONG-TERM EFFECTS

**Lead can affect all parts of the body and mind**



- Poor school performance & lower test scores
- Hearing & speech problems
- Slowed growth & development
- Hyperactivity & aggression problems
- Damage to the brain, kidneys & nerves



### PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

**Remove the lead source and look out for lead hazards**

Lead poisoning occurs when children ingest or inhale lead

- Have your home tested for lead (test soil and water too)
- Use a HEPA vacuum and disposable rags to clean lead dust
- Keep children away from lead paint & dust
- Wash hands, toys & pacifiers often
- Avoid imported foods & candies (i.e. Mexican candies)
- Don't allow children to mouth metal charms, keys, trinkets & jewelry—they may contain lead

**Provide early intervention & stimulation**

- Enroll children in early childhood education programs such as Head Start, child care, preschool, and play groups to stimulate learning
- Read to & play games with your child



**If you live in a rental property...**

- Inform your landlord if your child has an elevated blood lead
- Do not remove lead on your own, notify your landlord instead
- Remember, you can NOT be evicted for having a lead poisoned child

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## What Do Blood Lead Levels Mean for Your Child's Health

Any amount of lead is dangerous and can cause health and behavioral problems at all ages. A blood test is the only way to tell if your child has lead poisoning. All children should be tested at 1 and 2 years old. A test can be done in the doctor's office with a capillary 'finger-stick' blood sample. Depending upon test results, it may need a follow up test with venous blood from arm. **Confirm a capillary blood lead test with a venous test based on schedule below:**

Blood Lead Level (micrograms/deciliter)	Capillary or Venous	When to Retest	What can I do to help?
<5	C	Not necessary unless other risk factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to your child's doctor</li> <li>Feed child foods high in Calcium, Iron &amp; Vitamin C</li> <li>Wash hands frequently</li> <li>Clean floor and window sills with disposable wipes or wet mop</li> <li>Look out for "Take-Home" lead and other sources</li> </ul>
	V	Retest children < 12 mos in 3-6 mos as BLL may increase with mobility.	
5-7.4	C	Confirm within 3 months.	<b>Continue with above AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control known lead hazards</li> <li>Keep up good nutrition (Calcium, Iron &amp; Vitamin C)</li> <li>Consider testing other children in the home</li> </ul>
	V		
7.5-19	C	Confirm within 1 month	<b>Continue with above AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test siblings younger than 6 yrs.</li> <li>Ensure child has proper diet</li> <li>Follow up by NH HHLPPP will provide education, case management, and environmental assessment</li> <li>Consider developmental evaluation if elevated blood lead levels persist</li> </ul>
	V	Retest within 3 months	
20-44	C	Confirm within 1 week	<b>Continue with above AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove child from lead hazards</li> </ul>
	V	Retest every 1-2 months until <20 mcg/dL	
45 -69	C	Confirm within 48 hours	<b>Continue with above AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child needs immediate treatment and may need hospitalization</li> <li>Chelation may be necessary</li> <li>Ensure child returns to a lead safe environment</li> </ul>
	V	Seek immediate medical attention and test weekly afterwards	
≥70	C	Confirm IMMEDIATELY	<b>Continue with above AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TAKE CHILD TO HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT</b></li> </ul>
	V	Medical emergency, chelation treatment	

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NH Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Public Health Services

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