

LEAD



Cardinal Pediatrics
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What is Lead?

Lead is a naturally occurring heavy metal in our environment. In the past, it was added to things like paint, gasoline and metal pipes to make these things last longer since heavy metals do not break down or disappear over time. This means small bits of lead stay in the dirt around homes.

Lead in DIRT/DUST is the MOST COMMON EXPOSURE

How does lead get into a child's body?

Lead mainly enters through their mouths

- A child playing in their yard gets dirt on their hands and then eats an apple before washing
- At grandparents house, a child plays with a toy that has been around for decades. No one realizes that there is lead in the paint and tiny flecks end up on the child's hands and then into their lunch
- A toddler crawling on the kitchen floor where the dirt from peoples shoes collect

How does lead harm a child?

- Lead can build up in a child's body in their brain, nervous system and bones
- Lead hurts brain development
- The body can only get rid of a little bit of lead at a time, so any extra lead that the child accidentally eats or breathes get stored in and harms the body

My child has an elevated blood level. What do I do now?

#1 Look for sources of lead in your home and remove them or decrease your child's exposure to those areas.

SOIL / DIRT PLAY / DUST

- Cover dirt areas in yard by planting grass seed or cover over with landscape fabric
- Have everyone remove their shoes at the door
- Wet mop hard floors and vacuum carpets at least once weekly
- ALWAYS WASH HANDS (both children and parents) before touching food
- Wash a child's face before meals if it is dirty

PAINT

- Watch for peeling/chipping paint in homes built before 1978; paint over old paint
- * True lead paint removal is to be done by professional

WATER / LEAD PIPES

- Use cold water for cooking, drinking and formula preparation.
- * Let the water run for a couple of minutes before collecting for use.

#2 Follow up with your doctor. Get repeat blood lead levels tests at recommended intervals

#3 Choose healthy foods

- When a child eats a healthy diet with foods high in iron, vitamin C and calcium, their body absorbs less lead
- Eat two servings of dairy foods and two fruits daily
- Eat iron-rich foods, such as, meats, eggs, beans, nuts, green vegetables, cereals fortified with iron



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Remember we are only a phone call away!