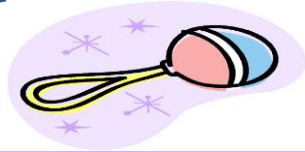


# LEAD POISONING



## Protect Your Children



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

The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to get a blood lead test. Many factors can put your child at risk for lead exposure.

- Living in a home built before 1978 with deteriorated paint or with ongoing repairs or renovations
- Attending a head start, day care or child care facility with deteriorated paint that was built before 1978.
- Playing in contaminated soil
- Spending time with an adult who works with lead in a job or hobby (ex. hunting, painting, auto repair)
- Eating or drinking food stored or served in glazed pottery or leaded crystal
- Using traditional home remedies and imported products (ex. Kohl, Azarcon, Alarcon, Greta, Pay-loo-ah)
- Swallowing or mouthing metal charms, trinkets, key fobs, or jewelry

The State of Mississippi has regulations concerning who may work on residences built before 1978. Disturbing the existing paint on these structures can be a violation of these regulations.



### SYMPTOMS OF LEAD POISONING

**Most lead poisoned children DO NOT look sick**

The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to get tested. Some children might experience:

- Stomach ache
- Headache
- Trouble paying attention
- Trouble eating or sleeping
- Irritability

### LONG-TERM EFFECTS

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

- Lower IQ
- Hearing & speech problems
- Slowed growth & development
- Hyperactivity & attention problems
- Damage to the brain, kidneys & nerves
- Easily loses balance

### PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

#### Remove from the lead source/hazards

Lead poisoning occurs when children ingest lead containing materials

- Keep your house clean & dust free
- Keep children away from lead paint & dust
- Have your home tested for lead
- Look out for contaminated soil or water
- Avoid imported foods and candies
- Be careful with metal charms, trinkets, key fobs & jewelry
- Don't use recalled products & toys

#### Provide early intervention & stimulation

Engaging children in activities may stimulate learning

- Enroll children in early childhood reading programs, classes & learning activities
- Read to & play games with your child
- Provide a healthy diet including foods rich in iron and calcium

MS Department of Environmental Quality

Lead-based Paint Program

601-961-5171



# Lead Poisoning ✓ Home Checklist

The following questions will help you determine if your family is at risk for lead poisoning.

If yes, ✓

\_\_\_\_\_ **1. Was your home built before 1978?**

A majority of homes built before 1978 (especially homes built throughout the 1940s to 1960s), contain lead-based paint, which can have a dangerous effect on the health of young children (under the age of six) and pregnant women.

\_\_\_\_\_ **2. Do you see walls, furniture, or window sills in your home with chipping or peeling paint?**

Lead-based paint is unsafe if it peels, chips, or cracks. Harmful lead dust is created when windows, doors, edges of stairs, rails, or other lead-based painted surfaces wear away over time. You or your landlord can get your home checked for lead by hiring a trained, certified professional. Many young children put their hands or other objects covered with lead dust in their mouths, which can cause serious damage to their health. Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys often.

\_\_\_\_\_ **3. Do your children play in lead-contaminated soil near your home?**

Soil around homes with lead-based paint may have lead chips, dust, or flakes in it. Children can accidentally swallow this soil while playing outdoors, or the soil may be tracked indoors from shoes onto carpet and floors where children can eventually come into contact with it. Teach children to wipe and remove their shoes, as well as to wash their hands, after playing outdoors.

\_\_\_\_\_ **4. Do you store food in imported pottery that contains lead?**

Imported pottery and dishware usually contain lead. To protect your family from lead poisoning, use imported pottery only for decoration, and keep food and drinks in other safe, storage containers.

\_\_\_\_\_ **5. Do you work with lead in your job?**

You may be exposed to lead on the job if you work as a painter, ironworker, construction worker, cable splicer, automobile radiator repair mechanic, firearms instructor, metal shop worker, stained glass artist, or battery maker. If you work in a lead-related industry, change your work clothes before entering the home, wash your work clothes separately from the clothes you wear around your family, and remove your shoes before entering your home, as lead can be tracked indoors onto carpets, floors, and furniture.

**If you have answered yes to any of these questions, have your home tested by a certified professional by contacting 1-800-424-LEAD (5323) or visiting [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead). If you rent, find out if your landlord has checked your home for lead. Have your children tested for lead poisoning by asking your doctor or your health specialist at a Head Start center to do a simple blood test. Medicaid should pay for the cost of the lead poisoning test.**



To find simple ways to prevent lead poisoning in your home look for the "Chance of a Lifetime" brochure at your Head Start center.

