

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) ABOUT

LEAD

1. What is lead?

Lead is a metal found in our environment. It can be found naturally in soil, rocks, air, and water. It's been used in many products like paint, ceramics, pottery, pipes, plumbing materials, batteries, bullets, and cosmetics. Lead has also been found in some foods, spices, and home remedies. Industries working with lead such as smelters or battery recyclers can release lead into the air.

2. How are you exposed to lead?

You have contact with lead when you:

- Eat lead-based paint chips or peels from homes built before 1978
- Work in a high risk job (like car mechanic or welder) where you touch, breath in, or bring home dust that has lead in it
- Touch dust or soil that has lead in it and then put your fingers in your mouth by mistake
- Drink water or eat candy, food, or spices that have lead in them
- Take herbal or natural supplements that have lead in them
- Use remedies that have lead in them like Greta, Azarcon, pay-loo-ah, Ghasard, Ba-baw-san, or Daw Tway
- Use makeup that has lead in it like Surma and Kohl
- Use dishware and pottery made outside of the U.S.
- Have a bullet inside of your body

3. How can lead affect your health?

Eating lead or breathing lead dust can cause lead poisoning. This can hurt the brain, kidneys, liver, and other organs. Children less than 6 years old and pregnant women are at higher risk. In children, lead poisoning affects their growth, learning, and behavior. In pregnant women, lead poisoning causes high blood pressure, the baby to be born too early (premature birth), or losing the baby (miscarriage).

Lead may cause permanent damage. Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. Signs of lead poisoning may include headaches, nausea, weakness, and trouble eating, sleeping, or paying attention.

4. How is lead poisoning tested and treated?

Most of the time, lead poisoning has no symptoms.

So, the only way to know is with a blood lead test. If your child is between 1 to 6 years old, ask your doctor whether to test for lead.

Treatment depends on the level of exposure and can range from simply not having contact with the source of lead to going to the hospital for lead removal. There are no known safe levels of lead.

For More Information

**Los Angeles County,
Department of Public Health**

[http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/
AreasofInterest/lead.htm](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/ AreasofInterest/lead.htm)

[http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/lead/
index.htm](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/lead/index.htm)

**California Department of
Public Health (CDPH)**

[https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/
CLPPB/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/default.aspx)

**Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention (CDC)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/>

5. How can you prevent lead poisoning?

| Tip | More Information |
|---|---|
| Get tested for lead | Ask your doctor about a lead test if your child is between 1 to 6 years old. If you believe you have been exposed to lead, ask your doctor about a lead test. |
| Eat healthy foods | Avoid foods high in fat and give these healthy foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron-rich foods: Beans, cereals with iron, lean meat, fish, tofu • Calcium-rich foods: Milk, yogurt, cheese, dark-green vegetables, and canned salmon • Vitamin C: Oranges, tomatoes, limes, bell peppers, broccoli, berries |
| Keep your home's painted surfaces in good repair | Don't let paint start to chip or peel in homes built before 1978 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never dry sand/scrape painted surfaces so you don't make and spread lead dust • Use lead safe work practices for any repairs of painted surfaces • If the property owner won't fix peeling paint hazards, call 1-888-700-9995 |
| Keep your home clean and dust-free | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet mop floors instead of dry sweeping to stop the spread of dust • Wipe window sills and other surfaces often with a wet cloth • Use a vacuum that has a HEPA filter or use an allergen filter bag |

Steps to Lower Risk of Lead Exposure

Tips for communities near the Exide Technologies battery recycling plant in Vernon, CA

Wash hands and toys often

- Lower hand-to-mouth transfer of lead dust or soil by washing your children's hands after playing outside, before eating, and at bedtime. Wash their toys often.

Do not let children play on bare soil

- Playing on grass or sand can lower exposure to bare soils that may have lead.
- Watch your children play outside and avoid contact with bare soil.
- Do not let children eat bare soil.

Take off shoes before coming into your home

- This helps to lower the chance of bringing lead into your home. Also note that pets may bring lead into the home from the soil outside.
- Wash lead tainted clothes separately.

Request a free blood lead test, call the Blood Lead Screening Hotline: 1-844-888-2290

- Free blood lead testing is available to any person who lives, works, or goes to school in the communities near Exide. All results are confidential. If you have more lead-related questions, call: 1-800-LA-4-LEAD (1-800-524-5323).