

What is Lead?

Lead is a heavy metal and basic chemical element. Lead is also a poison. It can slow mental and physical growth and make you very sick. For these reasons, knowing where lead might show up in your environment can help you to avoid contact with it!

Childhood lead poisoning is still one of the most important health issues in the United States today. According to recent CDC estimates, 890,000 U.S. children age 1-5 have elevated blood lead levels. More than 1 in 5 African-American children living in housing build before 1946 have elevated blood lead levels. Lead poisoning can be so subtle that the affected child may not show any clear physical signs. Therefore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend screening all children at age 1. Children living in high risk areas or populations for lead exposures should be screened until age 5.



Who We Are: COEC

About Us

The Community Outreach and Engagement Core (COEC) at the Center of Excellence in Environmental Toxicology at the University of Pennsylvania works to provide research information from the Center's research team to community, professional, and Public Health decision-makers in order to improve clinical and public health. Concerned with the effects on vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and underserved populations, the COEC develops models and approaches to community environmental health. The COEC brings community concerns to the Center to spark environmental research ideas that affect the community's health.

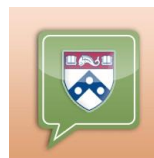
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Lead: It's Still a Problem

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Community Outreach and Engagement Core
(COEC)

Center of Excellence in Environmental
Toxicology (CEET)



What happens if a child is lead poisoned?

Slowed growth, hearing loss, learning problems, behavior problems.

“66% of Homes in the US Still Contain Lead.”

Sources of Lead and What You Can Do

House Paint

Homes built before 1977 likely contain lead-based paint and old paint flakes off.	· Don't sand off old paint. Let your landlord know about chipping paint. · Wet mop and dust often.
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Soil

Soil (dirt) near heavily-used streets, old homes, old factories, and even playgrounds may contain lead.	· Wash hands after playing outside. · Hand sanitizer does not remove lead.
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Drinking Water

Lead may get into drinking water when materials used in plumbing contain lead. Well water can become contaminated at anytime.	· Run the water for 10 minutes before drinking, cooking, or making baby formula. · Test well water annually.
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Others

Lead is also found in some imported children's toys, candy, and cosmetics	· Be aware of the items you are buying and consuming.
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Did You Know?

- Lead poisoning is a very common problem for young children.
- Lead tastes sweet, which make children, want to eat it.
- Peeling lead paint especially from windows end up on floors.
- Children under the age of 3 are at high risk because they crawl or play on the floor.



Are you Pregnant or Thinking about Having a Baby? You Should Get Tested for Lead Too!

Beginning December 21, 2012, the [Lead Paint Disclosure and Certification Law](#) requires Philadelphia landlords to ensure that property rented to families with children 6 years and younger is lead safe.

The only way to know if your child has been poisoned is to get them **tested!** Blood lead levels greater than 5 ug/dL are elevated.

Removing lead paint should be done by professionals who will prevent the lead from contaminating the home. Residents should not live in homes where lead paint is being removed.

Have your child tested by their doctor or healthcare provider, or contact the health department to find out where they offer free testing for children and pregnant women!