



SEASONAL HEALTH ALERT

Childhood Lead Poisoning

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Contact WAPC at mryuk@wapc.org with questions

Lead poisoning is considered one of the most preventable environmental diseases among children. Each year, National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (NLPPW; October 25-31 in 2020) calls on individuals, organizations, industry, and state, tribal, and local governments to come together to reduce childhood lead exposures by increasing lead poisoning prevention awareness. The Washington Poison Center is dedicated to these goals during NLPPW and all year long. Our established partnerships with Public Health—Seattle and King County, the Somali Health Board, Horn of Africa, Living Well Kent, and many other King County organizations assist our efforts in educating communities about lead poisoning, sources of lead exposure, and the importance of screening children for elevated lead levels. If you are interested in involvement with our lead education, please email mryuk@wapc.org. View an online lead education session and access community resources [on our website](#).

How can my child be exposed to lead?*

- Two important sources of lead exposure are lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust. Housing built before 1978 are likely to contain lead-based paint and release lead-contaminated dust.
- Children may also be exposed to lead through:
 - Children's toys
 - Jewelry and keys
 - Drinking water
 - Dust/fumes from parent hobbies or work
 - Lead glazed ceramic ware, pottery
 - Traditional home remedies & cosmetics
 - Contaminated soil
 - Imported candy
 - Imported spices and cookware

*Source: Washington State Department of Health "Common Sources of Lead Poisoning".

What should I know about lead & drinking water?

- Drinking water is NOT typically a main source of lead poisoning in the United States. Lead in water usually comes from water distribution lines, household plumbing, or fixtures.
- The only way to know the amount of lead in your household water is to have your water tested. Many certified labs in Washington state perform these tests for \$25 to \$50 per test. Find a certified lab in Washington state at <http://bit.ly/CertifiedWaterTestingLabs>.

Tips to keep children safe from lead exposure

- Test paint and dust in homes built before 1978. Learn about lead testing at <https://bit.ly/2ksKXTX>.
- Remodel, repair, and paint old homes safely, as sanding or scraping paint can create lead dust. It is safest to use a certified lead-based paint abatement provider, found at <https://bit.ly/2mc0GHs>.
- When remodeling or repairing housing, use certified, "lead free" piping.
- Only use cold tap water for drinking and cooking.
- Clean screens and aerators in faucets frequently to remove captured lead particles.
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys often.
- Remove shoes before entering your house to avoid bringing in soil. Damp dust and mop regularly.
- Wash hands often after working or playing outdoors.

How can I find out if my child has been exposed to lead?

Bring this flyer to your child's healthcare provider to talk about your concerns. A blood test is the only way to determine if your child has been exposed to lead. The earlier lead poisoning is diagnosed, the more can be done to help your child. Learn more about lead at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Contaminants/Lead>.