

# SEASONAL HEALTH ALERT

## Childhood Lead Poisoning

Issued: October 2021

Contact WAPC at [mryuk@wapc.org](mailto:mryuk@wapc.org) with questions

Lead poisoning can affect anyone and is one of the most preventable environmental diseases among children. Each year, **National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week** (NLPPW; October 24-30 in 2021) 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**.

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

A **blood test** is the only way to determine if you or your child has been exposed to lead. The earlier lead poisoning is diagnosed, the more can be done to help your child. Contact your doctor to schedule a blood test, and learn more from the [Washington Department of Health](#).

### 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

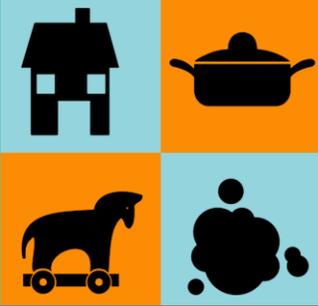
\*Source: Washington State Department of Health "[Common Sources of Lead Poisoning](#)"

### 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>.
- [Damp dust and mop](#) regularly, especially around window frames and door frames.
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys often.
- Remove shoes before entering your house to avoid bringing in soil.
- Wash hands often after working or playing outdoors.
- When remodeling or repairing housing, use certified, "lead free" piping.
- Only use cold tap water for drinking and cooking and let your faucets run for 30-60 seconds each morning.
- Clean screens and aerators in faucets frequently to remove captured lead particles.

### What is Washington Poison Center doing to reduce lead exposure?

We continue to work with our partners, including [Public Health—Seattle and King County](#), the [Somali Health Board](#), [Horn of Africa Services](#), [Living Well Kent](#), and [Worth a Shot](#), to 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](mailto:mryuk@wapc.org). View an online lead education session and access community resources [on our website](#). Follow the Washington Poison Center's posts on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) during NLPPW to learn more about what you can do to protect yourself and others from lead poisoning.



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### Links and Resources:

- Washington Department of Health lead overview:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Contaminants/Lead>
- Washington Department of Health – Common Sources of Lead Poisoning:  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/HealthyHome/Contaminants/Lead/CommonSources>
- Environmental Protection Agency – Questions and Answers for Homeowners and Renters about Understanding Lead Inspections, Risk Assessments, and Abatements:  
<https://www.epa.gov/lead/questions-and-answers-homeowners-and-renters-about-understanding-lead-inspections-risk>
- Washington State Department of Commerce – Lead-Based Paint Activities:  
<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/lead-based-paint/lead-based-paint-program-lbpabatement/>
- Healthy Homes – Staying Safe Around Lead video: <https://youtu.be/PUmxiyfUOg>
- Public Health – Seattle & King County – Facts about lead and its human effects  
<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/environmental-health/toxins-air-quality/arsenic-lead/about-lead.aspx>
- Somali Health Board: <https://somalihhealthboard.org/about/>
- Horn of Africa Services: <https://www.hoas.org/about>
- Living Well Kent: <https://livingwellkent.org/index.html?locale=en>
- Worth a Shot: <https://www.youthawaremagazine.com/community-initiatives/worth-a-shot>
- Washington Poison Center – Lead Poisoning Prevention:  
<https://www.wapc.org/programs/education/lead-poisoning-prevention/>
- Washington Poison Center – Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MrYukWA>
- Washington Poison Center – Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/MRYUKWA>