



Strengthening Health Systems to Reduce Lead Exposure

PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM LEAD POISONING

What is lead?



Lead is a heavy metal with poisonous effects on the human body.

Where do you find lead?

Lead can be found throughout a child's environment

- Lead-contaminated soil, local paints, metal and ceramic cookware, toys, spices, cosmetics, and some traditional medicines.
- Occupation/Workplace: Parents working with or near lead-based products may bring lead dust back into the home on clothes, hair and shoes.

Common Sources



METALLIC & CERAMIC COOK/FOOD WARES



SPICES



LOCAL PAINT



TOYS



COSMETICS



UNSOOUND BATTERY RECYCLING

How can your child be exposed to lead?

- Eating food cooked with lead-contaminated spices, or cooked in lead-contaminated pots
- Eating food without washing hands first
- Eating contaminated soil, chewing fingernails, putting toys in their mouth, licking their hands etc.
- Breathing in lead particles from factory smoke or dust



Pregnant Women

Exposure to lead before and during pregnancy can be very harmful and can

- Increase the risk of miscarriage
- Cause a baby to be born too early or too small
- Hurt a baby's brain, kidney, and nervous system.



How does lead harm you and your child's health?

Lead is toxic and harmful to everyone.

Health impacts of lead exposure vary across stages of life. Children are most affected because their brains are still developing and they absorb more lead than adults.



Brain & nerve damage



Reduction in IQ & learning difficulty



Speech & behavioural problems



Hearing problems



Anaemia



Reduced growth





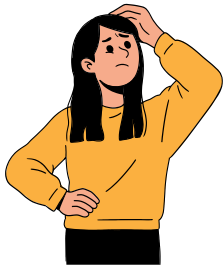
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What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

At low levels of lead exposure, there are no symptoms, even while lead is harming children. At moderate to high levels of exposure, there may be a variety of symptoms, such as

Memory loss



Learning difficulty



Aggression



Headache



Vomiting

Fatigue

Abdominal pain

Lead poisoning is preventable. Here are some steps you can take

- **Talk to your child's doctor about getting a blood lead test.** Discuss with your doctor and try to identify and remove any source of lead exposure in your home.



To prevent lead poisoning:

- **Keep your home clean and dust-free:** Clean your floors with a wet mop.
- **Wash children's hands and toys often:** Wash your children's hands and teach them to wash their hands after outdoor play, before eating, and at bedtime.



- **Maintain good nutrition:** Eat foods that are high in calcium, iron, and vitamin C. Children with a healthy diet absorb less lead.



- **Do not bring lead dust home from your work:** For parents exposed or working in lead-contaminated areas (e.g., lead smelting plant, car repair shop), remove and wash clothes upon return home, and keep work clothes separate from other clothes. Keep work shoes out of the house.

Additional Resources

For further information, visit your nearest District Hospital or the District Early Intervention Centre (DEIC)