

The goal of the HCPHES Lead Hazard Control Program is to reduce serious and permanent health problems through the early detection of high blood lead levels and reducing the prevalence of lead poisoning **in children under six years of age**. The services we provide include:

- Education to physicians, families of children with elevated blood lead levels and others regarding the need for lead testing.
- Conducting targeted screening in groups or areas of high risk.
- Public education and outreach about the hazards of lead based paint and other sources.
- Case management for children with blood lead levels of 10 µg/dL or greater, in accordance with guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Department of State Health Services.
- Assessment and identification of housing units with lead based paint hazards.
- Lead remediation of owner occupied, single-family residences and relocation of families when necessary. All housing units must be located within the Harris County service area. This includes all of Harris County except the Cities of [Houston](#), [Pasadena](#) and [Baytown](#).

Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services
Lead Hazard Control Program
2223 West Loop South
Houston, TX 77027
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<http://www.hcpheh.org/env/lead.htm>



LEAD: IS YOUR CHILD AT RISK?

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW...



**Lead Hazard
Control Program
(713) 439-6369**

HOW DOES LEAD GET INTO YOUR CHILD'S BODY?

A child may eat lead or breathe it in, in the form of dust from deteriorating paint. Children like the sweet taste of lead based paint chips.



SOURCES OF LEAD

Most homes built before 1960 contain lead paint. Some homes built as recently as 1978 may also contain lead. The paint could be on window frames, walls, the outside of your house, or other surfaces. Cracking, peeling and chipping paint from these homes may be swallowed or breathed in by children. Lead paint can definitely be a problem in places where painted surfaces rub against each other, like doors and windows.



OTHER SOURCES:

- Ceramic glazes (pots and bowls of clay)
- Stained glass objects
- Loading or casting bullets
- Fishing weights
- Lead dust carried home from work on your clothes or shoes
- Soil with lead from old paint
- Old plumbing fixtures
- Car batteries and radiators
- Old vinyl mini-blinds

Lead can be found in many folk medicines or home remedies such as Pay-loo-ah, Ghasard, Bali Goli, Kandu, Azarcon and Greta. Azarcon is a bright orange powder and Greta is a yellow powder, both of which contain up to 90% lead. They are given to children who have stomach problems such as constipation and colic. Any amount is **poisonous** to children and adults.



A mother with lead in her body can give it to her unborn child. Babies exposed to lead before birth may be born premature and underweight .



LEAD HURTS THE MIND AND BODY

Lead poisoning should be taken seriously because prolonged lead exposure, even in small amounts, can produce serious health issues such as:

- Slower growth and development
- Behavior problems
- Hearing problems
- Decreased intelligence/learning difficulties
- Hyperactivity

LEAD POISONING AFFECTS THE:

- Brain
- Red blood cells
- Nervous system
- Kidneys
- Digestive system
- Reproductive organs
- Bones

Lead deposits in the bones of children and then releases back into the blood as the child grows.

At high levels, lasting and permanent health problems or conditions can result from lead poisoning such as:

- Mental retardation
- Convulsions
- Coma
- Death



SIGNS OF DAMAGE MAY SHOW UP LATER

Many times there are no obvious signs of lead exposure. At high levels, symptoms may be mistaken for the flu.

- Crankiness
- Headaches
- Lack of coordination
- Unusually tired
- Trouble sleeping
- Stomach ache
- High blood pressure
- Muscle or joint pain
- Anemia
- Loss of appetite



HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS POISONED?

HAVE YOUR CHILD TESTED FOR LEAD!

Who should be tested?

- Children who have not been tested or are 12 months to 6 years of age.
- Children who live in a house built before 1978 or a house with peeling paint.
- Children who are known to have been exposed to lead (ex. pottery or toys).



Where can I get the test?

- Your doctor's office
- Local health clinic

What the Test Results Mean:

If blood lead level is...	A Child needs...
0-9 mcg/dL *	No further action required.
10-14 mcg/dL	Follow-up testing within 3 months.
15-19 mcg/dL	Follow-up testing within 2 months.
20-44 mcg/dL	Medical evaluation and care. Inspection for and removal of lead hazards in the child's environment.
45-69 mcg/dL	Medical evaluation and care. Inspection for and removal of lead hazards in the child's environment, all started within 48 hours.
70 mcg/dL or higher—	Immediate hospitalization and treatment. Inspection and removal of lead hazards in child's environment.

For all blood levels of 10 mcg/dL and higher, parents should receive additional information about lead sources and how to decrease exposure.

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

- Have your children tested for lead, even if they appear healthy.
- Have your home tested for lead.
- Keep your children away from peeling paint.
- Keep the areas where your children play as dust free and clean as possible.
- Have your child wash his hands frequently, especially after playing outside, before meals and bedtime.
- Wash your child's pacifier and toys often.
- If you work with lead in your job or hobby, be sure to leave your shoes outside and bathe before touching your children.
- Take old batteries for recycling.
- Don't burn painted wood; it may contain lead.
- Run the water for one minute before you first use it in the morning. Use only cold water for preparing baby formula and for drinking.
- Give your child a diet rich in calcium, vitamin C and iron. Some good sources are milk, yogurt, low fat cheeses, green leafy vegetables, citrus fruits and juices, bread, cereal, beans, fish, and meat.
- Replace old plastic mini-blinds with ones that are lead free.
- Use a wet mop to clean the floors; avoid sweeping.
- Vacuum rugs and carpets before damp dusting the home.
- Use a damp/wet rag to remove peeling paint and dust from base boards, window sills, door frames. Throw rag away in a plastic bag.