

Lead (Pb) Exposure from Consumer Products

Sources, Health Effects, & Prevention



Did you know...

Some medicines, spices, cosmetics, glazed pottery, and food can contain lead and may be sold in stores, bought online, or friends and family may bring them back after traveling.

Common Sources of Lead

Ayurvedic, Herbal, & Other

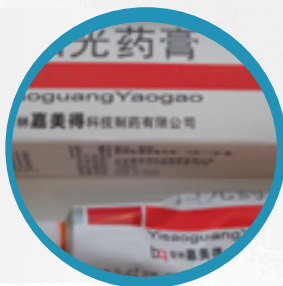
Traditional Medicines believed to treat a wide variety of illnesses. Examples include *asavas*, *arishtas*, *vati*, *churna*, *kashya (kwath)*, *ba-baw-san*, *greta*, and *azarcon*.



Spices purchased in supermarkets or online such as *turmeric*, *cinnamon*, *curry powder*, *saffron*, *masala*, *chili powder*, *paprika*, *cumin*, *ginger*, *thyme*, *coriander*, and *basil*.



Ointments & Pastes For example, *Hondan* a powder used as ointment for diaper rash, dry skin. *Yisaoguang Yaogua*, ointment used for skin rash. *Thanaka*, ointment or paste used as sunscreen/skin protectant.



Ceremonial Powders often used for religious purposes. Examples include *Sindoor*, *tika*, *bindi*, *pottu*, *Kumkum powder*, *tilak*, *kohl*, *kajal*, *surma*, *kajal (al-Kahal)*, *tiro*, *tozali*, & *kwalli*.



Metal Jewelry can be gold or silver plated but can also contain lead. Children should never put any metal jewelry into their mouths.



Some **glazed pottery** can contain lead and should not be used for food preparation or serving.

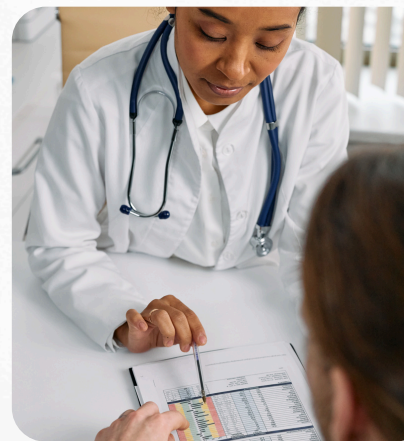


Charcoal (such as *Uunsi*), and other **incense**, and **candle** wicks can also contain lead.

How does lead exposure effect your health?

Lead can affect almost every organ in your body, but particularly the nervous system. The effects of lead are the same whether it enters the body by breathing it in or eating it.

- **Short-term exposure:** Severe damage to brain and kidneys, and can even cause death.
- **Long-term exposure:** Decrease in learning, memory, attention, and weakness in fingers, wrists, or ankles and can also cause anemia (low iron in the blood), damage to the kidneys and increases in blood pressure.
- **Children:** Even low levels of lead in the blood can lead to learning and behavioral problems.
- **Pregnant women:** High levels may cause miscarriage.
- **Males:** Damage to reproductive organs and infertility.



How to prevent lead exposure from consumer products?

- Avoid buying products that may contain lead. Even small amounts can still be harmful.
- Only testing these products in a laboratory can tell you if they have lead. It is hard to tell if the products you buy have lead in them just by looking at them or tasting them and the people selling them often don't know.

What to do if you are concerned about lead exposure?

- Contact your health care provider if you are concerned that you or your family may have been exposed to lead from these types of consumer products.
- If there is possible lead exposure at your job or you use lead as a hobbyist, take steps to avoid bringing lead into your home. See the following: [Don't Take Lead Dust Home from Work in English](#): and [Español](#).
- If you are pregnant or have questions about getting your child tested, visit the NJDOH [Childhood Lead Program](#).

ATSDR/CDC: ToxFAQs for Lead: [cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=93&toxid=22](https://www.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=93&toxid=22)

A Spoonful of Lead: A 10-Year Look at Spices as a Potential Source of Lead Exposure:

pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30507772/

Lead in Spices, Herbal Remedies, and Ceremonial Powders Sampled from Home Investigations for Children with Elevated Blood Lead Levels — North Carolina, 2011–2018:

[cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6746a2.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6746a2.htm)

FDA Draft Guidance on Lead in Food for Young Children:

[fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/draft-guidance-industry-action-levels-lead-food-intended-babies-and-young-children](https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/draft-guidance-industry-action-levels-lead-food-intended-babies-and-young-children)

NJDOH Resources on preventing childhood lead exposure: nj.gov/health/childhood-lead/resources/