

HOW CAN LEAD AFFECT MY BABY?



Lead is harmful to brain development. It can also cause permanent problems like:

- Lower brain, kidney, and nervous system function
- Reading and learning disabilities
- Increased antisocial & aggressive behavior
- Reduced attention span and lower IQ
- Decreased muscle and bone growth; reduced coordination
- Preterm (early) birth
- Loss of pregnancy if lead levels are very high

CHECK FOR LEAD:



- Get tested!
 - Lead is checked using a blood test.
 - If you have high lead levels while pregnant, your baby will need to be tested at birth.
- If your home was built before 1978, ask your local health department (LHD) to check your home and water for lead. Find your LHD: bit.ly/my-LHD

HELPFUL TIPS:



- Take off your shoes before going into your home to help keep out dust or soil.
- Wash hands, toys, and play areas regularly, especially low areas where kids can reach.
- Buy and use products for your home and for self-care from the USA.
- When renovating your home, block off and clean the work area. Consider moving to lead-safe housing until the project is finished.

LEARN MORE:



Call:

New Jersey Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222

Visit Online:

- **NJDOH Environmental Health:**
 - bit.ly/enviro-lead
- **NJDOH Biomonitoring Program:**
 - bit.ly/biomon-prg
- **Partnership for Maternal & Child Health of Northern NJ:**
 - bit.ly/lead-prev
- **Centers for Disease Control & Prevention:**
 - bit.ly/cdc-lead-prev

Speak to your health care provider if you have any concerns.



**LEAD EXPOSURE & PREGNANCY:
HOW TO PROTECT YOU & YOUR BABY**

WHAT IS LEAD?

Lead is a toxic metal that may be found in:

- plumbing in older homes
- paint from before the 1980s
- house dust
- old toys
- soil or dirt
- imported foods (like spices)
- products from other countries (like cosmetics or clay pots)

LEAD & PREGNANCY

If a pregnant woman is exposed to lead, the lead passes from the mother to the baby through the umbilical cord.



Even though lead may pass to the baby through breastmilk, **breastfeeding is usually the best option for your baby.** If you have high lead levels, ask your health care provider if breastfeeding is safe.



ENVIRONMENT

- Do not touch or eat peeling paint.
- Vacuum often to avoid breathing dust or dirt with lead.
- If someone is exposed to lead at work, they should change their clothes or shoes before going home.



WATER

- Change your water filter regularly.
- Use cold water for drinking and cooking. Hot water is more likely to have lead.
- Run the faucet for 15 seconds to one minute if you have not turned it on in a few hours.



HOW TO PROTECT AGAINST LEAD:

ITEMS AT HOME

- Do not use greta and azarcon in home remedies. They have lead in them.
- Avoid using ceramic pottery like clay pots, plates, or jars, from outside the USA.
- Avoid ayurvedic medicine as some may have lead.
- Beauty products from other countries like makeup, kohl, or hair dyes, might have lead.



WHAT YOU EAT

- Avoid eating items that are not food, like earth, clay and paint chips.
- Avoid certain spices or candies that might contain lead.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet that has vitamins C and D, iron, calcium, and folate. Eat small fish, meat, cereals, beans, green leafy vegetables, and oranges.

