

# **Protect Your Child from the Risk of Lead Poisoning**

Leaded dust is the most common source of lead exposure for younger children. If you live in an older home (built before 1978) where paint is chipped, cracked, or worn. Especially if you have older painted windows and doors (friction areas when opened/closed) that can release lead into the dust which is not visible to the eye, but can still be on your child's hands. All you need is one teaspoon's worth of leaded dust in your home for your child to become lead poisoned. Most children who become lead poisoned do not look or act sick, yet, it can damage the developing brain. This leads to learning disabilities, behavior problems, and other health issues later in life. Younger children are more vulnerable due to their oral habits, faster metabolisms, and smaller size. Below are some simple measures you can take to help protect and ensure your child's future:

- ❖ **Please get your child tested** (WIC only tests hemoglobin, NOT lead). It is important to take your child for scheduled check-ups at your pediatrician's office. Your child should be lead tested at least at ages one and again at two. If there are any risk factors or concerns of exposure, testing should continue once a year until your child turns six. Confirmed venous blood lead levels of five and above are action levels in New York State.
- ❖ **Establish routine hand-washing** using soap, water, and the friction of rubbing hands together each time (hand sanitizer does nothing to remove invisible lead dust):
  - ✓ after playing outside,
  - ✓ before eating (whether a snack or a meal),
  - ✓ before naptime and bedtime, and
  - ✓ more often if your child likes to put his/her hands in their mouth
- ❖ **A healthy low-fat diet** throughout the day to include high amounts of
  - ✓ **Iron** (meats, beans, nuts if not allergic, dried fruits, leafy greens, and iron-fortified cereals).
  - ✓ **Vitamin C** (fruit, particularly citrus fruits, melon, broccoli, tomatoes, and peppers).
  - ✓ **And Adequate Calcium** (2-3 servings per day).Encourage your child to sit in one place when eating (not on the floor where dust settles).
- ❖ **If Older Plumbing** in your home, **use only cold water** from your tap for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. Allowing the water to run **at least one minute** when it has not been run in a few hours. Boiling water does not remove lead. Clean out your faucet's aerator regularly.
- ❖ **Good Housekeeping** with weekly **damp dusting and damp mopping** (using single use cleaning throwaway products is best) to control the amount of dust in your home.
- ❖ **Never vacuum up paint chips from windowsills where lead dust is more concentrated.** If you see paint chips around, you should pick them up with a wet paper towel.
- ❖ **Renovate Right using safe methods** to protect your family when repairing your home. Do not dry sand/scrape older paint. Children should not be around when work is being done. Safe cleanup is important following work. If the outside of your older home was ever painted, do not grow vegetables or allow your children to play in the dirt close around the house due to contamination from rain run-off in the "drip zone".



Feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns.

(716) 278-1900

Niagara County Department of HealthLead Poisoning Prevention Program



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.