

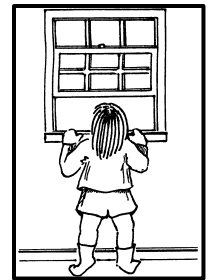
TWELVE LEAD HAZARDS

Younger children under 6 years of age are more at risk of damage to their developing brains due to their smaller sizes, oral habits, and higher metabolisms.

1. **Lead-Based Paint:** Lead was a preservative in paint and was not banned for residential use in the USA until 1978. Manufacturers began reducing some of the lead concentrations in the two decades prior to the ban due to changes in HUD housing regulations in 1960. The likelihood of a house containing lead-based paint has been estimated as a curve with these markers:
 - Prior to 1940: 98% - this paint could be up to 50% lead by weight
 - 1940 to 1960: 70% - the amount of lead started to decline, but is still significant
 - 1960 to 1978: 20% - realizing a ban was likely, the amount of lead sharply declined
 - After 1978: It is unlikely to find significant levels unless paint not intended for housing was used.

The most common source of lead exposure is leaded dust in older homes, especially around older painted windows. Niagara County has many older homes where paint can become weather worn and deteriorated over time. When lead based painted surfaces are disturbed during renovation and repair, invisible lead dust can also be released. Only one teaspoon's worth of leaded dust scattered throughout a home is enough to lead poison a child. This increases the risk of lead poisoning to children less than 6 years of age and pregnant women who are more vulnerable. The age of a house, which often indicates the presence of lead-based paint and the condition of the house are two of the major risk factors considered for childhood lead exposure.

2. **Dirty/Dusty Floors/Surfaces:** Potentially contaminated household dust, and tracked in dirt, can be found on floors or trapped in carpeting. Children spend a lot of time in contact with carpeted or hard surfaced floors where dust settles. Children can transfer invisible leaded dust to their mouths from their contaminated hands with normal hand-to-mouth activity. Dust generated during home renovation/repair or tracked in soil contaminated by exterior paint/past leaded gasoline fumes exposure or industrial sources adds to this exposure.
3. **High Soil Lead:** Playing in outside dirt, which can be contaminated with lead, contributes to adverse lead exposure in children. In addition, the soil found around the foundation of older homes can often test very high for lead from prior contamination by lead-based paint scraped off during renovation, repainting/repair, or years of rain run-off. Do not allow children to play in this "drip zone" and do not plant vegetable gardens there either. Kicking shoes off at the door will also limit lead dust tracked in.
4. **Windows and Porches:** Lead-based paint is often found in windows of older houses as well as on older painted porches that are often used as play areas. Toddlers may either touch or mouth areas that have accumulated significant levels of lead dust while pursuing their love of looking out of windows. Lead dust and paint chips are more likely to be found in window well troughs because of the stress to the old paint from friction (opening and closing window) and weather changes. Never vacuum up any paint chips found, but remove with wet paper towel instead.

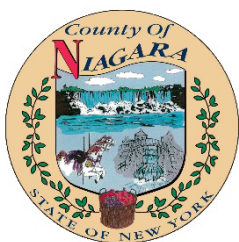


5. **Jewelry Made of Metal:** 2006 saw the death of a 4-year-old in Minnesota who swallowed a metal charm included with a pair of shoes. Children's jewelry – both cheaper costume items and expensive designer brands – as well as metal bookmarks, ornaments, hair clips and many other items have been recalled through the years. For more information, go to the Consumer Product Safety Commission at www.cpsc.gov or contact Niagara County Department of Health (NCDOH).
6. **Brass Keys Mouthed by Children:** Combination metals often contain varying amounts of lead. The common practice of letting children mouth keys should be discouraged. This is also true of metal or antique jewelry.

7. **Contaminated Candy:** Imported candy (a great reference is the 2004 Orange County Register special report called “Toxic Treats” – online at <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/candy-219217-lead-truck.html>).
8. **Some spices and traditional folk medicines** or products routinely imported from outside of the USA may also present a risk of lead exposure with recalls in the past. Parents should be aware that some items from their country of origin might not be safe for use.
9. **Pottery:** We urge people to read package labels, and avoid homemade items (like pottery or glazed ceramics) for food or beverage use and discontinue using any chipped, cracked or deteriorated dishware for food preparation, serving or storage. Families should also avoid using lead crystal, pewter or antique dishware unless they know it is lead safe.
10. **Lead Dust on any adult child comes in contact with:** Lead dust can contaminate clothing, vehicles and work items during an occupation such as construction/renovation/demolition, plumbing, welding, shooting firearms/gun ranges, fishing weights, automotive battery and radiator repair, electronics repair, or any manufacturing using lead and be transferred to children at the end of the day. Adults need to be aware of their possible exposure on the job and take steps to protect their health and the health of their family from “take home lead”. Changing clothing, washing up, and kicking shoes off at the door is important before playing or having contact with younger children.
11. **Lead in Vinyl and Plastics:** The manufacturing process for many vinyl and plastics includes lead, which can remain in varying amounts in the final product. To be a hazard, the lead needs a way to leach out of the product and into a person. Two common items have been vinyl mini-blinds and electrical wiring covered in vinyl or plastic, such as Holiday lights. Brightly colored imported toys can also be a problem with the paint used on the surface. Children should never chew on items not designated for mouthing. Consumers should also read package labels to choose products that claim to meet US safety standards as a minimum precaution.
12. **Lead on Antique Items:** Unfortunately, many items handed down from relatives or found at garage and estate sales may have lead in the surface paint or decorative trim. This can include stained glass window art, metal cars, pewter items, cribs, highchairs, dishware, trunks, dollhouses, and other children’s furniture. Families with small children who are likely to touch and mouth these items should choose to keep them out of reach or discard them to protect their family from lead exposure unless they are sure the items are lead safe or children are past the mouthing stage.

General Guidelines for Families to Follow to Stay Lead Safe

- Get your child tested – all children should be tested at least at one (1) and again at two (2) years of age and then consider testing through age five (5) for any risk factors.
- Keep it clean – ordinary dust and dirt may contain lead. Damp mop and damp dust regularly, especially around windows, cleaning inner ledge before cleaning trough well. Never vacuum up paint chips.
- Reduce the risk from lead paint – look for possible lead hazards and keep your child away from chipping, peeling or chalking surfaces and do not allow a child to mouth or chew a painted surface.
- Work Lead Safe by Renovating Right – don’t try to do renovations or repair work in a home built prior to 1978 until you learn how to do it safely or hire someone trained to work lead safe.
- Do not bring lead dust into your home from work, a hobby or your yard. Kick shoes off at door.
- Eat right with a diet higher in iron and vitamin C and adequate Calcium.
- Good handwashing using friction of rubbing hands together with soap & water especially before eating.



**For more information, contact the
Niagara County Department of Health
Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

716-278-1900



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.