

How can I protect my family from lead?

Lead is natural to our environment. It has been used in many products for hundreds of years. The bad news is that lead is dangerous to humans if it enters the body. It can be inhaled, swallowed, and ingested from many different sources. In New Jersey, children are most likely to be exposed to lead by lead-based paint that has broken down over time, usually in the form of paint chips and dust.

There is no safe level of lead in the human body.

It does not belong there. Even at very low levels, lead can cause serious harm to children and adults. Children are more likely to have serious disease from low levels of lead than adults. New Jersey mandates that **children under the age of 6 years be tested for lead at ages 1 and 2, or as soon as possible before the age of 6.** Some of the dangers to a child's health may include damage to the brain, kidneys, and nervous system. The good news is that there are steps you can take to protect your family from lead. Talk with your health care provider or local health department to learn more about receiving a blood lead test.

For more information about lead poisoning prevention:

[Insert Local Health Department Information]

New Jersey Poison Control Center
(NJPIES)
1-800-222-1222



STAY LEAD-FREE TEST TWICE BEFORE 3

Learn the facts about lead and how you can keep your family safe.



What is lead?

Lead is a soft metal that can easily break down into a fine dust. Lead dust from damaged paint is the most common cause of childhood lead poisoning in New Jersey. It is very easy to inhale or swallow. If your home was built before 1978 and there is peeling or cracking to any painted surface, contact your health care provider or local health department about blood lead testing.



How can I protect my family?

Handwashing is helpful to keeping hands clean from germs and lead.

Wet cleaning is when a damp cloth or mop is used to clean hard surfaces in the home. Hard surfaces can be window sills, air vents, door frames, and others.

HEPA-filter vacuums come in handy when cleaning soft surfaces like curtains, carpets, and couches. *Please do NOT empty the vacuum bag or filter indoors.*

A healthy, balanced diet rich in Vitamin C, iron, and calcium can help resist lead from staying in the body.

Practice **safe hobby and work habits**. If you or anyone in your home, work or has a hobby that exposes them to lead hazards, talk with your provider about ways to handle those materials safely.

Have your **home professionally inspected** if you suspect there may be lead paint or plumbing in your home. This is really important in homes built before 1978.

Where else can lead be found?

Lead can enter the body through:

- Eating non-food items containing lead
- Fishing and hunting supplies
- Glazed pottery and tubs
- Lead in plumbing
- Snacks
- Some health/medical treatments
- Spices