

Let's prevent lead poisoning in children!

Lead is a metal that is found naturally in our environment. It has been used in many common household items such as paint, pipes, and cans. Lead is poison to our bodies. If we are poisoned by lead, it can be absorbed into our bones and make us sick. It is a problem for children who are growing. Too much lead can damage a child's brain and cause other health problems.

Children can be protected from lead. Tell children to wash their hands frequently when they have been playing outside and touching the soil. Everyone should always wash their hands before eating. Make sure that children never eat paint chips that may contain lead.

Lead paint may be found on toys, window sills, doors, stairs, railings, porches or fences. Old homes are most likely to have lead. Before 1978 it was legal to use lead paint. Lead may be in dust when paint is scraped or sanded. Look around your home and notice if there is peeling paint or dust that should be removed. Parents should also wash the children's toys to remove dust. Dust is the most common cause of lead poisoning.

There are some other ways you can prevent lead poisoning. Do not eat too many fried or fatty foods because fat will increase the amount of lead that your body can store. Healthy food can reduce the risk of lead poisoning. Eat iron rich foods like lean red meat, fish, chicken, cereal and dried fruits. Eat plenty of calcium rich foods like milk, yogurt, cheese and leafy green vegetables. Foods that are rich in vitamin C are good too. Try oranges, tomatoes and green peppers. These foods taste good and they are good for you. Remember that children with empty stomachs absorb more lead than children who are well fed. Children should have 4 to 6 small meals every day.

Visit your doctor. The doctor can do a simple test to see how much lead is already in your child's body and the doctor will monitor your child throughout childhood to see if your child is being exposed to lead. Your doctor can give you good advice. Always feel free to ask your doctor questions. Your doctor can help you to raise happy, healthy children!