No Level of Lead in the Body is Known to Be Safe

“Low-level lead exposure, even at blood lead concentrations below 5 μg/dL (50 ppb), is a causal risk factor for diminished intellectual and academic abilities, higher rates of neurobehavioral disorders such as hyperactivity and attention deficits, and lower birth weight in children. No effective treatments ameliorate the permanent developmental effects of lead toxicity. Reducing lead exposure from residential lead hazards, industrial sources, contaminated foods or water, and other consumer products is an effective way to prevent or control childhood lead exposure.”


“Blood lead concentrations, even those below 10 mcg per deciliter, are inversely associated with children’s IQ scores at three and five years of age, and associated declines in IQ are greater at these concentrations than at higher concentrations. These findings suggest that more U.S. children may be adversely affected by environmental lead than previously estimated.”


“Evidence from this cohort indicates that children’s intellectual functioning at 6 years of age is impaired by blood lead concentrations well below 10 mcg/dL.”


California Statutes and Regulations for Providers Caring for Children 6 Months to 6 Years of Age

California state statutes and regulations impose specific responsibilities on doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician's assistants doing periodic health care assessments on children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years. In the State of California, "screening" means testing an asymptomatic child for lead poisoning by analyzing the child's blood for evidence of lead exposure.

Evidence from this cohort indicates that children’s intellectual functioning at 6 years of age is impaired by blood lead concentrations well below 10 mcg/dL. Blood Lead Concentrations < 10 mcg/dL and Child Intelligence at 6 Years of Age, Todd A. Jusko, Charles R. Henderson Jr., Bruce P. Lanphear, Deborah A. Cory-Slechta, Patrick J. Parsons, and Richard L. Canfield, Environmental Health Perspectives 2008; 116: 243 - 248

Federal Refugee Guidelines (www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/)

- Blood lead test all refugee children 6 months to 16 years old at entry to the U.S.

- Within 3 - 6 months post-resettlement, follow-up blood lead tests should be conducted on all refugee children aged 6 months to 6 years, regardless of initial screening blood lead level.

- Evaluate the child’s iron status including a hemoglobin/hematocrit and red blood cell indices.

- Children under the age of six should be given a daily multivitamin with iron.
## Potential Sources of Lead: Educating Families to Prevent Childhood Lead Exposure

### Old paint inside or outside the home
- Most lead paint is in homes built before 1978

**Guidance for Families**
- Move cribs, high chairs, and playpens away from cracked or peeling paint.
- Do not allow children to chew on windowsills or other painted surfaces.
- Call local lead poisoning prevention program about testing paint for lead.

### Dust on windowsills, floors, and toys

**Guidance for Families**
- Wet mop floors and wet wipe windowsills and other surfaces.
- Wash toys often.
- Wash children’s hands before eating and sleeping.

### Dirt outside the home

**Guidance for Families**
- Cover bare dirt with stones, grass, plants, or gravel.
- Wipe shoes or take them off BEFORE going in the house.

### Drinking Water

**Guidance for Families**
- For cooking or drinking, let water run until cold before using.
- Do not use a water crock unless it has been tested and found to be lead free.

### Take-home exposure from shoes/clothing/hair if family member works around lead or performs auto repair at home

**Guidance for Families**
- Shower and change clothes BEFORE coming home from work, if possible, and BEFORE holding children. Remove work clothes and shoes and store them in a plastic bag. Wash work clothes separately from other clothes.

### Some dishes or pots that are worn or antique, from a discount or flea market, made of crystal, handmade, or made outside the USA

**Guidance for Families**
- Call local lead poisoning prevention program for more information about testing dishes and pots for lead.

### Traditional remedies, such as:
- Azarcon and Greta — orange or yellow powder
- Paylooaoh — red powder
- Some Ayurvedic remedies
- Some traditional Chinese remedies

**Guidance for Families**
- Do not let anyone give “natural” or traditional remedies to your child without talking to your health care provider first.

### Some traditional cosmetics & other substances applied to the skin, such as:
- Surma
- Kohl
- Sindoor

**Guidance for Families**
- Do not use these products on children.
- Call local lead poisoning prevention program about testing traditional cosmetics, ritual powders, and other substances applied to the skin.

### Altars for religious ritual containing:
- Ritual powders
- Brass and some other metal, ceramic, or painted items

**Guidance for Families**
- Place altars with these types of items in areas not accessible to children.
- Don’t let children handle or mouth these items.
- Use separate cleaning supplies to clean these items.

### Some costume jewelry, amulets, and keys

**Guidance for Families**
- Do not allow young children to play with, mouth or touch these items.

### Some foods and spices, such as:
- Some candies (especially imported)
- Chapulines (grasshopper snacks)
- Some imported spices, such as turmeric, chili powder, Khmeli Suneli
- Game meat containing lead shot

**Guidance for Families**
- Be aware of foods and spices that might contain lead.
- Offer children meals and snacks including a variety of vegetables, fruit, legumes, seeds, nuts, whole grains, unprocessed meats, and dairy products or dairy substitutes without added sugar.

### Other items, such as:
- Fishing sinkers, bullets, pellets, and solder
- Some art supplies and sewing chalk

**Guidance for Families**
- Keep these items away from children.
- Wash hands well after touching these items.
- Do not heat, melt, cast or file any metal items at home.

### Spends time at firing ranges

**Guidance for Families**
- Children who spend time at firing ranges should be tested for lead.
- Use lead free ammunition.
- Do not eat or drink at a firing range.
- When finished shooting, immediately wash your hands and face with soap and water.
- Change clothes and shoes before going home and wash those clothes separately.

### Retained bullets and shrapnel

**Guidance for Families**
- Consult with your healthcare provider about ongoing testing and monitoring.

### Lives or spends time near:
- Major roadways or freeways
- A former or current lead or steel smelter
- A foundry or industrial facility that historically emitted or currently emits lead
- A general aviation airport used by small aircraft

**Guidance for Families**
- Tell your healthcare provider if your children live or spend time near these types of roadways or facilities.
- Do not let children play or spend time near these types of roadways or facilities.

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Download patient brochures and other childhood lead poisoning resources at: [https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/CLPPB/Pages/prov.aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/CLPPB/Pages/prov.aspx)

For additional information about lead poisoning contact:
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
Tel. (510) 620-5600