

Lead Poisoning

Common Places Lead Is Found

- Lead was banned from use in paint in 1977, but many homes and buildings built before 1978 will still have lead paint in them.
- Lead can be in drinking water if a building is using lead pipes. These buildings are usually those that were built before 1986.
- Any imported products may contain lead. This includes anything from food wrappers, to jewelry, to toys.
- Soil can have lead in it from lead paint that has flaked off of fences, porches, houses, etc.
- Dust in the home can have lead in it from sources such as old lead paint on surfaces like window frames and walls, lead from soil tracked into the house from outside, or even from lead dust on clothing worn at a job site.

Symptoms

The Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research state the following symptoms for lead poisoning:

Symptoms in Children

- Developmental delay
- Learning difficulties
- Irritability
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Sluggishness and fatigue
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Hearing loss

Note: these symptoms could be a cause of something other than lead poisoning. See a doctor if symptoms are present.

Symptoms in Adults

- High blood pressure
- Abdominal pain
- Constipation
- Joint pains
- Muscle pain
- Declines in mental functioning
- Pain, numbness or tingling of the extremities
- Headache
- Memory loss
- Mood disorders
- Reduced sperm count, abnormal sperm
- Miscarriage or premature birth in pregnant women

Prevention

- Get paint and dust in your home tested for lead.
- Keep all surfaces clean from dust.
- Regularly wash hands and children's toys.
- Do not buy imported toys for children.
- Take off shoes before entering the house to prevent carrying in any lead sources from outside.
- Do not let children play in soil.