

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEAD POISONING

## Lead poisons people.

- Children between 9 and 36 months of age are at increased risk of the effects of lead.



## Lead poisoning can cause:

- Slow growth and development
- Speech and hearing delays
- Problems with learning and behavior
- Lead poisoning can affect and damage ALL body systems

## Lead can be ingested (eaten) or inhaled (breathed in).

- The most common cause is dust from old lead-based paint. If floors have dust from old painted walls, or paint chips, a baby could suck on lead-dusted hands or toys or breathe in lead dust. Some toddlers eat paint chips, soil, or chew on lead-painted window sills and stair rails.
- Lead can also be found in soil and water, Asian and Hispanic folk medicines for stomach upset, and some cosmetics imported from the Middle East.

## How is lead tested?

- At well-child visits at ages 1 and 2, your health care provider will collect a blood specimen to check for screening for elevated blood lead levels.
- A small amount of blood is taken from a finger prick or vein and tested for lead. Blood can be drawn at a doctor's office, hospital, clinic or lab. If you don't know where to bring your child for testing, call your local health department.

## Feed your family foods that get ahead of lead.

- Foods high in iron, calcium, and vitamin C can help prevent lead poisoning.
- Feed children healthy snacks: A child with an empty stomach will absorb more lead.

## How can I prevent lead poisoning?

- Keep children away from peeling paint and broken plaster.
- Wash their hands and toys often, to rinse off any lead dust or dirt.
- Use cold water - not hot - for infant formula or cooking. Let the cold water run for at least a minute before using to flush lead picked up from pipes.
- Store food from open cans in glass or plastic containers. Use lead-free dishes without chips or cracks.
- Avoid having children play in soil especially, around the foundations of older buildings and near roadways. Keep children away from remodeling and renovation sites.
- Don't bring lead home with you from work. People who work at construction, plumbing, painting, auto repair and certain other jobs can be exposed to lead. Wash work clothes separately.
- When windows are open in warm weather, wash the sills and window wells any time you see dust, but at least once a month.

**Call your local health department to learn more and for information about professionals who handle lead-based paint problems.**



### Oswego County Health Department

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# Beware of Lead!

*Do YOU know where lead may be hiding?*



**Lead is a metal** that can hurt children and adults. Children may not look or act sick, but a blood test could show that they have lead poisoning. This could harm their growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead can also be a problem for adults, especially pregnant women and their babies.



When **lead paint in your house** cracks or peels, it can drop chips or make lead dust. Children pick up these chips and dust when they crawl on the floor or put their hands and toys in their mouths. Children can get lead poisoning this way.

Did you know that **some medicines, spices, cosmetics, glazed pottery, and food from other countries could also contain lead?** The lead in these products has caused children to get sick.

There may be other products that we do not know about yet. They may be sold in a store in your neighborhood, or friends or family members may bring them back after traveling.

## Medicines and other products that may contain lead:



**Spices** imported from the Middle East, Latin America, India, and China can contain lead.



**Cosmetics** can also contain lead. Kohl (also known as surma or kajal), is one example. It is used to accent the eyes.



Many types of **candy** from around the world can contain lead.



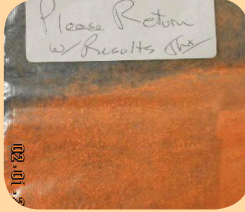
Herbal and Aryuvedic **medicines** from the Middle East, Latin America, India, and China can contain lead.

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**Ointments and pastes** from outside the United States can contain lead:



**Yisaoguang Yaogua** is an ointment from China used to treat skin rash.

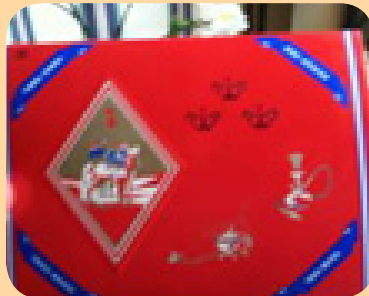


**Hondan** is a powder often used as an ointment for diaper rash and dry skin.



**Thanaka** is a Burmese ointment or paste made from trees used as sunscreen and to protect skin.

**Glazed pottery** can contain lead and should not be used for food preparation or serving.



**Incense and some candlesticks** can contain lead. Lead can be in charcoal, "unsi", and other incense you burn in your house and in some candle wicks.



**Metal jewelry**, including gold or silver plated, can contain lead. Children should never put metal jewelry into their mouths.

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**Contact** your doctor, your local Health Department, or refugee resettlement case manager if:

- Your family has used any of these products or products similar to these.
- You have questions about anything you see in these pictures.
- Someone gave you a new medicine or you have other questions about whether a medicine or product is safe for your baby or child.
- If you or one of your family members work with lead.
- Your home has cracked, chipped, or peeling paint.
- You are concerned your child may have lead poisoning or may have been exposed to products containing lead. Every child should have their blood tested, even if they seem fine.

