



## Centre Medical and Surgical Associates, P.C.

YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER FOR LIFE

Centre Medical and Surgical Associates, P.C. • Department of Pediatrics  
3901 South Atherton Street • State College, Pennsylvania 16801 • Telephone (814) 466-7921  
141 Medical Park Lane • Bellefonte, Pennsylvania 16823 • Telephone (814) 355-3626  
[www.centremedsurg.com](http://www.centremedsurg.com)

# Lead Poisoning

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued new guidelines for lead poisoning. Previously, we were concerned only with high lead levels known to be related to such symptoms as anemia, mental retardation and coma. Scientific studies demonstrated that children with lead levels that were previously considered safe are having more behavioral, intellectual and school problems than lead-free children. The conclusion is that no amount of lead is considered entirely safe for children. Action should be taken to remove lead from our children's environment and identify those that are at risk for poisoning.

## WHERE DOES MY CHILD GET EXPOSED TO LEAD?

Lead is a naturally occurring metal that has been used in products such as paint, plumbing fixtures, cans, gasoline and some ceramic glazes. Although lead has been removed from paint and gasoline, it remains in our homes and schools. In fact, 74% of homes built before 1980 have lead-based paint in them. Children come in contact with lead by eating paint dust or paint chips.

What can be done to protect my child from lead poisoning?

Several simple measures may be helpful to decrease your child's exposure to lead:

1. **Handwashing**, especially before meals. The incidental exposure to lead dust on floors, windowsills and play areas makes toddlers, because of their tendency to mouth objects, at particular risk.
2. **Provide a safe play area.** All obviously chipping paint should be carefully removed. Areas with lead paint that are in good condition should be kept clean and undisturbed or painted over. Of particular risk to children are windowsills and doorways because of their tendency to produce dust and children's frequent contact with them.
3. **Check before renovating.** Renovation of structures with lead-based paint, if not done properly, pose a particular risk to workers, homeowners and their respective families. As a general rule, anything painted prior to 1978 may contain lead paint. The State Health Department (865-0932) can provide a list of contractors who have expertise in lead removal. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania does not have a certification program for lead abatement. For guidelines you or your contractor should follow, write to: Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20003.
4. **Screening.** A blood test is a simple, inexpensive way to determine if someone has had exposure to lead.

*continued on back*

# Lead Poisoning

*continued*

## WHO SHOULD BE SCREENED?

We recommend lead testing for all high risk children (see below) starting at nine months.

## WHO IS AT HIGH RISK?

If the answer to any of the following questions is **yes**, then your child is at an increased risk of lead poisoning.

### **Does your child:**

1. Live in or regularly visit a building built before 1950, or with ongoing remodeling before 1978?
2. Have a sibling, housemate or playmate treated or followed for a high lead level?
3. Live with an adult whose occupation or hobby includes exposure to lead?
4. Use home remedies or herbal medicines from other cultures?
5. Use imported or glazed ceramics/pottery or lead crystal for food preparations storage, or as dinnerware, or eat imported foods from lead soldered cans?
6. Live in a home with vinyl mini blinds that were made in China, Taiwan, Indonesia, or Mexico?
7. Have the habit of eating dirt or soil?

## HOW DO I GET MY CHILD TESTED FOR LEAD?

Our office will give you the lab slip to have the test done at the CMSA Medical Laboratory (located in the Centre Medical Sciences Building) or at Mount Nittany Medical Center. We will notify you of the results of this test.