

Put The Lid On Lead!

For more information contact:

Your Local Health Department

KY Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
(502-564-2154) or at:
www.putthelidonlead.org

Cabinet for Health & Family Services web site:
www.chfs.ky.gov/dph/lead

Environmental Protection Agency web site:
www.epa.gov/lead

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
www.atsdr.cdc.gov

National Lead Information Center
(1-800-424-5323)

**KENTUCKY CHILDHOOD LEAD
POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM
502-564-2154**

275 East Main Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621

Phone: (502) 564-2154
Fax: (502) 564-8389

Web Site: www.putthelidonlead.org

May 2006

Pregnancy and Lead



***Even Small Amounts of Lead can
be Harmful to a Woman and Her
Unborn Child.***

KY Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
Cabinet for Health and Family Services



What is Lead & How is it Harmful?

Lead is a naturally occurring metal. It is found in many places and becomes harmful when a person swallows it or breathes it in. Children younger than 6 years of age and the unborn babies of pregnant women are most at risk for getting lead poisoning. Lead hurts a child's developing brain and other organs in their bodies. A pregnant woman with lead in her body can pass it to her unborn baby.

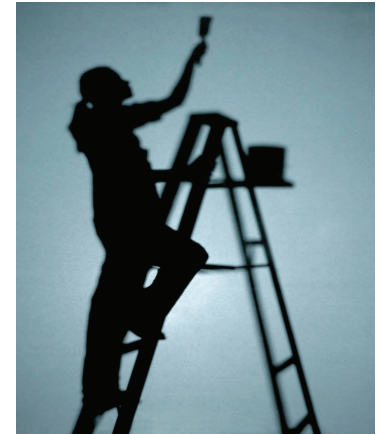
What are the Most Common Sources of Lead?



- Paint in homes built before 1978
- Dust and debris in homes built before 1978 that are being remodeled or renovated
- Hobbies including: refinishing furniture, making stained glass, ceramics, fishing with lead sinkers, electronics (Read labels on all arts & crafts materials to make sure they do not contain lead)
- Folk remedies including: Azarcon and Pay-Loo-Ah
- Cometics made outside of the United States
- Water-Pipes in older homes may be made of lead or have been soldered with lead

Things to do to have a healthy pregnancy

1. If you live in a house built before 1978 with peeling or chipping paint. Have someone damp mop your floors & clean around your doors & window frames with soap & water at least twice a week.
2. Do not paint or attempt to remodel your home while you are pregnant.
3. If your home is being remodeled and you are pregnant or of child bearing years, leave the home until the work is complete and properly cleaned.
4. Eat a healthy diet that is high in iron, calcium, vitamin-C folic acid & low in fat. Wash fruits and vegetables before eating.
5. Do not smoke or take drugs during your pregnancy.
6. Wash your hands often, especially before you cook or eat. Make sure family members wash their hands too.
7. Do not use folk remedies or cosmetics that come from other countries because they may contain lead.
8. If you or a family member work with lead, shower & change cloths (including shoes) before you go home. Wash work clothes separately from other laundry.



Could I be at risk for prenatal lead exposure?

Take the following test to determine your risk for lead exposure. If you answer yes, or don't know to any of the following questions and you are of childbearing age or pregnant, contact your health care provider and get tested for lead.

1. Do you live in or regularly visit a home built before 1978 that has peeling or chipping paint?
2. Do you or someone you live with work in any of the following occupations?

Auto mechanics	Migrant farm work	Construction
Steel welding	Plastic Manufacturing	Plumber
Firearms	Ammunition	Printing
Furniture refinishing	Battery recycling plant	

3. Do you participate in any of the following hobbies or live near possible lead polluted soil?
Ceramics—Jewelry Making—Gardening—Stained Glass
4. Have you or any of your children (or other members in your household) ever had abnormal lead levels ?

Protect Your Unborn Baby

- If you feel you are at risk, or answer yes to any of the above questions get tested
- Avoid potential lead hazards (chipping paint, dust, etc.)
- Learn what the effects of lead can have on you or your baby

- Contaminated Soil-Caused from peeling or chipping lead based paint on the outside of the house. Soil near highways may be contaminated with lead from leaded gasoline that was used before 1978
- Contaminated Food-Fresh vegetables that have been grown in soil containing lead (wash fresh vegetables & fruits thoroughly before eating). Food that is stored in some ceramic dishes or leaded crystal . Food that is prepared by someone with lead on their hands.

How Does a Pregnant Woman Become Exposed to Lead?

A pregnant woman becomes exposed to lead by breathing in or swallowing lead dust. Breathing in lead dust can occur if you live in a home built before 1978 that contains peeling or chipping paint. The paint , especially around windows and doors, flakes off and



becomes dust. When the home is dusted or swept with a broom, the dust becomes airborne and can be breathed in.

Exposure Continued.....

Lead dust can also be breathed in during remodeling of a home, where paint is being sanded or scraped off of walls and wood work.



Swallowing lead is another form of exposure. This occurs when you eat food that has been grown in contaminated soil, touching something that contains lead and not washing your hands, drinking hot liquids from a mug that has a leaded glaze, or from storing foods in lead crystal, pottery or ceramic dishes.

If you smoke or take drugs you could be swallowing lead because tobacco and many drugs contain lead.

you are exposed to industrial paint.

How Does the Unborn Baby Become Exposed to Lead?

Unborn babies become exposed when pregnant women breathe in or swallow lead. The lead enters the pregnant woman's blood stream and passes through the placenta (the organ that supplies the unborn baby with food and oxygen). Once the lead passes through the placenta it enters the baby's body and gets into its bones, brain and other organs.

If a woman was exposed to lead before she became pregnant her body may have stored the lead in her bones where it can stay for many years. During pregnancy the body needs calcium and other minerals that are stored in the bones. As the body releases these minerals, it may also release the stored lead back into the woman's blood stream. Once in the blood stream the lead will pass through the placenta, enter the baby's body and get into its bones, brain and other organs.

A Pregnant Woman's Exposure to Lead Either Before or During Her Pregnancy Increases the Babies Risk For:



Miscarriage or Stillborn-

Babies that are exposed to very high levels of lead could die before or at birth.

Premature Birth-Babies born early are at a higher risk for breathing problems, illness & death.

- **Learning & Behavior Problems-**Lead effects the unborn baby's brain & nervous system. This can cause the baby to not be as intelligent as other babies the same age. It can also cause learning problems which will last a lifetime.