



Lead

Everyday, we eat, drink, breathe, and touch chemicals that exist around us. The chemicals can affect our health. Planned Parenthood **GREEN CHOICES** will give you the information you need to make choices for better health and a greener environment — for yourself, your family, and your community.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEAD?

- Lead is a very harmful poison if it gets into your body. Even a tiny amount can be dangerous.
- Damage from lead poisoning
 - can last forever
 - can go on without any signs
 - may not show up for many years
- Just a little lead poisoning can
 - make it more likely for you to have a heart attack or stroke
 - make it harder for you to think, learn, and remember
 - make it harder for you to get rid of body wastes when you pee
 - make miscarriage more likely
- Very young children are at the greatest risk.
 - **Very small amounts** of lead in their bodies can make it hard for them to learn, pay attention, and do well in school.
 - **Small amounts** can cut down the number of blood cells in their bodies.
 - **Bigger amounts** can damage their kidneys, nervous system, and other major organs.
 - **Even bigger amounts** can lead to seizures or even death.

WHERE AM I LIKELY TO COME IN CONTACT WITH LEAD?

- **At home**

Lead can be in paint, dust, soil, air and water. Homes built before 1978 may have lead paint inside and out. The dirt around your home and the dust inside it may also have lead in them. It could come from paint, busy roads, or factories. Or you might bring it home from work on your clothes and shoes. It can get in your car and on your furniture, floors, and carpets. Lead can get in the air, soil, or water from gas exhaust or fumes from other factories, like those that make batteries. There also may be lead in your water if your home has lead pipes.



- **At work and play**

You may get lead poisoning casting weights for fishing, casting shot for shooting, construction, demolition, painting, pottery making, radiator repair, soldering, scrap metal recycling, working with stained glass, and target shooting.

- **In the products you buy at the store**

Many may have lead in them, including hair dye, home remedies made outside the U.S., lipstick, metal jewelry, painted furniture, and painted or plastic toys.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF?

- Wash toys and all surfaces in your home with a non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner each week.
- Wash children's hands often and always before they eat.
- Feed your children low-fat meals high in iron, calcium, and vitamin C, which combat lead poisoning.
- Make sure there's no lead in paint **before** you sand, scrape, power-wash, peel, or sandblast it. If there is lead in the paint, contact your local lead poisoning prevention program.
- Change out of contaminated work clothes and shoes **before** you go into your home or are around others.
- Don't use dishes for making, storing, or serving food or drinks if they are handmade, older, or imported — unless you are sure they do not contain lead.
- Don't use imported home remedies or cosmetics that might contain lead.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- Before painting or remodeling your home, contact your local lead poisoning prevention program. They can tell you the safest ways to work with lead paint. Click on your local area on this [map](#) for information on lead poisoning prevention. [<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/programs.htm>]
- You can find information [here](#) to avoid personal care products that may contain lead. [<http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/>]
- For questions regarding lead you can call 1-800-909-9898.