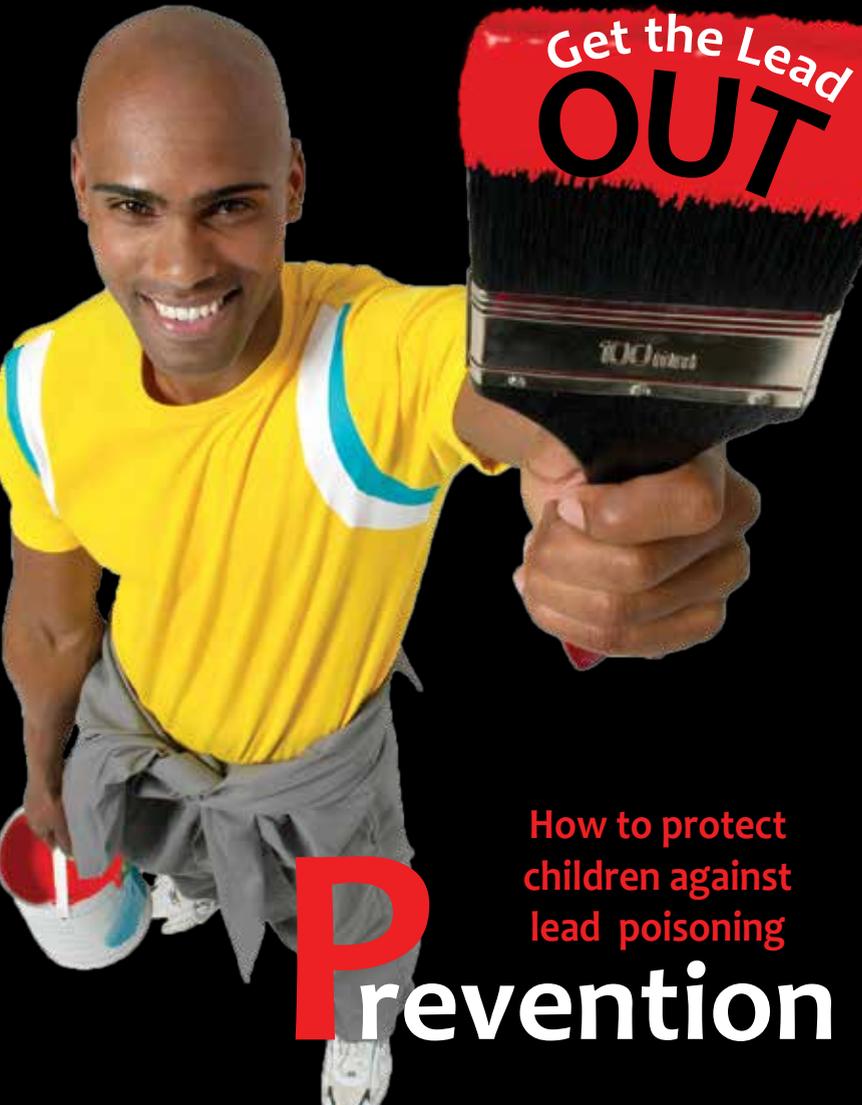




GET THE LEAD
OUT

Prevention
How to protect
children against
lead poisoning



Get the Lead
OUT

What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning happens when there is too much lead in the body. Lead is especially bad for children younger than 6 years old.

Lead gets in their bodies when children eat lead or breathe it in. Lead is found in many places. It can be in:

- dust
- paint
- dirt outside
- some vinyl mini-blinds
- other household objects or toys

How does it affect a child?

Even small amounts of lead may harm a child's brain, kidneys and stomach. Lead poisoning can slow a child's development and cause learning and behavior problems.

Your child may have lead poisoning and not feel sick. Or your child may have stomachaches, headaches, a poor appetite or trouble sleeping, or be cranky, tired or restless.

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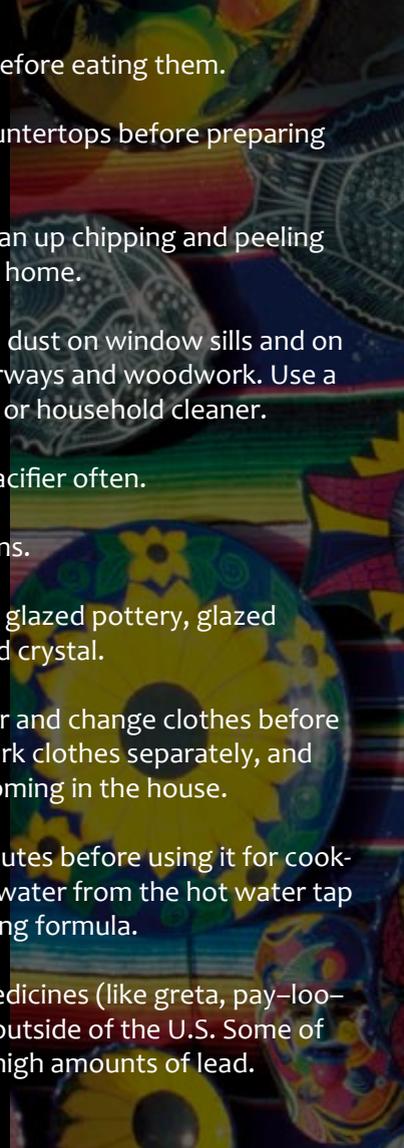
Screen your child for lead

All children 6 months to 6 years of age should be checked at least once a year to see if they are at high risk for lead poisoning. Your doctor or clinic can screen your child for lead poisoning by asking you several questions about your home environment and your child's habits. If your child is at risk for lead contamination, a blood lead test will need to be done. Blood may be taken from your child's finger or from a vein. To find out if your child could be lead poisoned, contact your doctor, clinic or local health department.

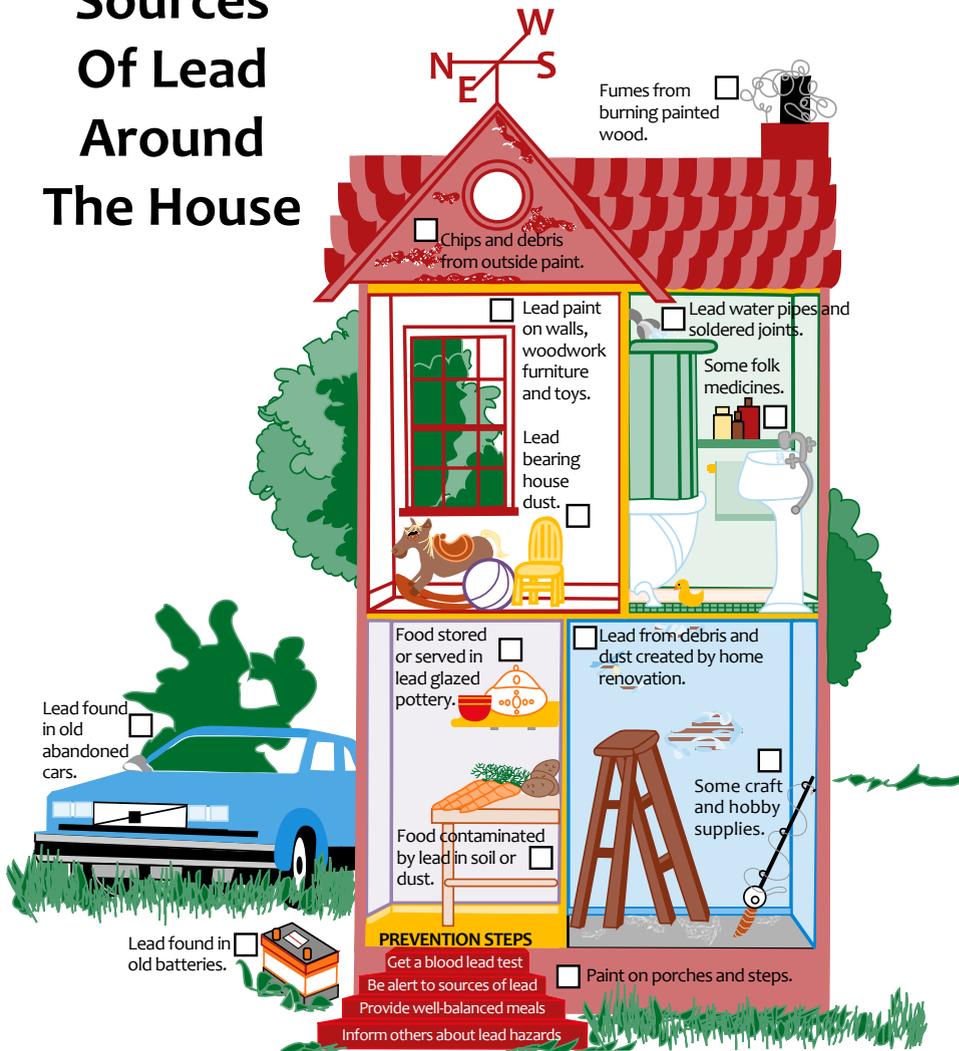
Women planning to have a baby should be checked for lead. Lead in a mother's body can cause a baby to be born too small and too early.

Protect your child from lead

1. Wash your child's hands and face before meals and bedtime.
2. Give your child three healthy meals and two nutritious snacks a day.
3. Foods high in iron and calcium (like lean meat, fortified cereals, eggs, raisins, greens, milk, cheese, fruit, and potatoes) help protect your child from lead. Limit foods high in fat and oil (such as fried foods and snacks like potato chips).
4. Wash fruits and vegetables before eating them.
5. Wash your hands and the countertops before preparing food.
6. Use lead safe methods to clean up chipping and peeling paint inside and outside your home.
7. Clean up paint chips and lead dust on window sills and on the floor near windows, doorways and woodwork. Use a damp mop or cloth and soap or household cleaner.
8. Wash your child's toys and pacifier often.
9. Do not store food in open cans.
10. Do not store or serve food in glazed pottery, glazed ceramic-ware, pewter, or lead crystal.
11. If you work with lead, shower and change clothes before coming home. Wash your work clothes separately, and take off your shoes before coming in the house.
12. Run cold water for a few minutes before using it for cooking and drinking. Do not use water from the hot water tap for cooking, drinking or making formula.
13. Do not give your child folk medicines (like greta, pay-loo-ah, azarcon) from countries outside of the U.S. Some of these folk remedies contain high amounts of lead.



Sources Of Lead Around The House



PREVENTION STEPS

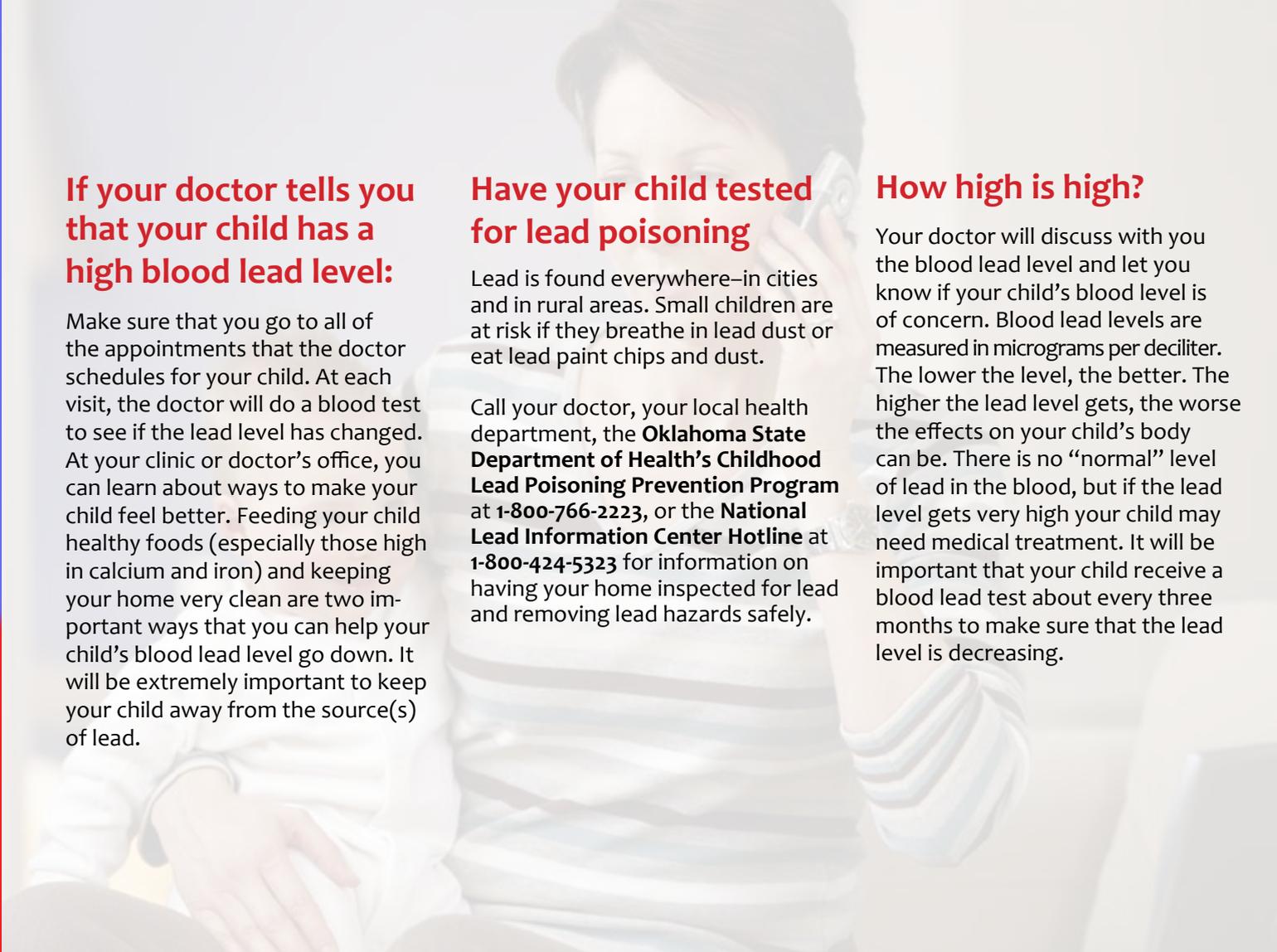
- Get a blood lead test
- Be alert to sources of lead
- Provide well-balanced meals
- Inform others about lead hazards
- Paint on porches and steps.

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If your doctor tells you that your child has a high blood lead level:

Make sure that you go to all of the appointments that the doctor schedules for your child. At each visit, the doctor will do a blood test to see if the lead level has changed. At your clinic or doctor's office, you can learn about ways to make your child feel better. Feeding your child healthy foods (especially those high in calcium and iron) and keeping your home very clean are two important ways that you can help your child's blood lead level go down. It will be extremely important to keep your child away from the source(s) of lead.

Have your child tested for lead poisoning

Lead is found everywhere—in cities and in rural areas. Small children are at risk if they breathe in lead dust or eat lead paint chips and dust.

Call your doctor, your local health department, the **Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program** at **1-800-766-2223**, or the **National Lead Information Center Hotline** at **1-800-424-5323** for information on having your home inspected for lead and removing lead hazards safely.

How high is high?

Your doctor will discuss with you the blood lead level and let you know if your child's blood level is of concern. Blood lead levels are measured in micrograms per deciliter. The lower the level, the better. The higher the lead level gets, the worse the effects on your child's body can be. There is no "normal" level of lead in the blood, but if the lead level gets very high your child may need medical treatment. It will be important that your child receive a blood lead test about every three months to make sure that the lead level is decreasing.

All children 6 months to 6 years of age should be assessed for lead poisoning at least once every year. Check with your doctor to make an appointment.

For further information, contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 1-800-766-2223 or the National Lead Information Center Hotline at 1-800-424-5323.

This brochure provides information on lead poisoning and describes steps you can take to reduce your child's exposure to lead.



Screening & Special
Services

Oklahoma State
Department of Health

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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