



LEAD POISONING PREVENTION FACT SHEET

What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning occurs when lead builds up in the body, often over months or years. Even small amounts of lead can cause serious health problems, particularly in young children.

Sources of lead exposure

- **Lead-based paint:** In homes built before 1978, peeling and cracking paint can create lead dust.
- **Contaminated soil:** Lead can be found in soil, near old homes, highways or industrial areas.
- **Drinking water:** Lead pipes, faucets and plumbing fixtures can leach lead into drinking water.
- **Household items:** Some toys, jewelry, make-up, spices, candy and pottery may contain lead.
- **Occupational exposure:** Work in settings where there is lead can expose employees and their families to lead dust hazards.

Health effects of lead poisoning

- **Children:** Developmental delays, learning difficulties, irritability, weight loss, sluggishness, abdominal pain, vomiting, constipation, hearing loss, and seizures.
- **Adults:** High blood pressure, joint and muscle pain, difficulties with memory or concentration, headache, abdominal pain, mood disorders, reduced sperm count, and miscarriage or premature birth in pregnant women.

Prevention tips

- Test your home for lead, especially if your home was built before 1978.
- Keep your home clean and dust-free by using a wet rag to clean dust around windowsills.
- Use cold water for drinking and cooking, hot water is more likely to contain higher levels of lead.
- Wash toys to reduce lead dust.
- Be cautious of imported toys, jewelry, and pottery that may contain lead.
- Maintain a healthy diet that is high in calcium, iron, and vitamin C to reduce lead absorption.

Testing and treatment

Blood Lead Test: The only way to know if your child has been exposed to lead is through a blood test. Talk to your healthcare provider about testing. If your child has been exposed to lead, follow your healthcare provider's recommendations for treatment and reducing further exposure.

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About the Healthy Homes Lead Program



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Healthy Homes and Lead Paint Hazard Grant Program

With funding from Cook County and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), CCDPH fixes lead paint and other health hazards in homes in suburban Cook County communities for families that qualify. Through Healthy Homes for Healthy Families, a Cook County and Elevate initiative, grant program participants can also receive free safety, energy efficiency, water conservation and whole home upgrades. Funding for this program is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act.

Program benefits

- Program benefits include inspection and repair of lead paint and other hazards, such as: mold, pests, unsafe electrical, radon, structural repairs or weatherization. Lead hazard repairs typically include painting, replacing windows or other home repair work to remove or contain lead paint.
- **All assessments, updates and repairs are at no cost to homeowners.**

Eligibility

You may be eligible for this program if:

- You own or rent a single-family home or a 2–4-unit multi-family building built before 1978 in suburban Cook County. (Chicago residents: Visit www.chicago.gov for lead resources in Chicago.)
- A child under age 6 years old lives in or frequently visits your home.
- You meet income requirements. For example, a family of four must have an income below \$134,520 per year to be eligible. Full income eligibility requirements can be found below.

Apply for the grant

Scan the QR code to apply or contact us for more information.

For more information

- **CCDPH Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Homes Unit**

Contact us about how to prevent lead poisoning and make your home a healthy home:

- Call - 312-515-0366
- Email - HealthyCook@cookcountyhealth.org
- Website - www.cookcountypublichealth.org
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/lead-prevention/communication-resources/know-the-facts.html>

