LEAD POISONING PREVENTION TIPS

Helping families recognize and reduce hazards and exposures.









LEAD-SAFE COOK COUNTY
leadsafecookcounty.com

Cook County Dept. of Public Health
A division of Cook County Health

BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is raising awareness about the dangers of lead exposures and the importance of preventing childhood lead poisoning. Lead exposure can cause serious health problems, especially for young children - affecting their growth, development and ability to learn.

Lead can be found in older homes, particularly in lead-based paint and dust, as well as in certain water sources, soil and household products. Because lead poisoning often has no obvious symptoms, prevention and early detection are especially important. This campaign encourages parents and caregivers to recognize potential sources of lead, reduce exposure risks and talk to their healthcare providers about blood lead testing for children.

This toolkit provides ready-to-share communications resources to help community partners amplify these messages, raise awareness and promote lead poisoning prevention throughout suburban Cook County.

Inside, you'll find:

- Social Media Posts (English and Spanish)
- Sample Blog Articles (English and Spanish)
- Palm Cards (English, Spanish, Hindi)
- Brochures (English, Spanish, Hindi)

Tag CCDPH

- Facebook – www.facebook.com/ccdph
  - @CCDPH or @Cook County Department of Public Health
- X (formerly Twitter) – www.x.com/cookcohealth
  - @cookcohealth
- LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com/company/cook-county-department-of-public-health/
  - @Cook County Department of Public Health
- Instagram - www.instagram.com/cookcountypublichealth
  - @cookcountypublichealth
- TikTok - www.tiktok.com/cookcountypublichealth
  - @cookcountypublichealth



Social Media Posts - Lead Poisoning Prevention Tips



[Click here to access the graphic.]

Sample caption:

Lead testing requirements have expanded. All Illinois children are now required to be tested for lead at 12 and 24 months. Previously, testing requirements were based on whether a child lived in a high-risk ZIP code.

There is no safe level of lead in the blood. Lead exposure can affect a child's health and development, and testing is the best way to know if a child has been exposed.

Learn more at Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Publicaciones para redes sociales: consejos para prevenir la intoxicación por plomo



Haga clic aquí para ver el gráfico.

Ejemplo de texto para la publicación:

Se ampliaron los requisitos de la prueba de plomo. Ahora todos los niños de Illinois deben hacerse la prueba de plomo a los 12 y a los 24 meses. Antes, los requisitos de la prueba dependían de si el niño vivía en un código postal de alto riesgo.

No hay ningún nivel de plomo en la sangre que sea seguro. La exposición al plomo puede afectar la salud y el desarrollo de un niño, y la prueba es la mejor forma de saber si un niño estuvo expuesto.

Obtenga más información en Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Social Media Posts - Lead Poisoning Prevention Tips



Click here to access the graphic.

Sample caption:

Did you know that lead hazards could be hiding in your home? 🏠

Older homes may contain lead-based paint. When paint chips, peels or creates dust, it can put young children at risk of lead exposure.

Even small amounts of lead can affect a child's growth and development. There is no safe level of lead in a child's blood.

Learn more at Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Publicaciones para redes sociales: consejos para prevenir la intoxicación por plomo



Haga clic aquí para ver el gráfico.

Ejemplo de texto para la publicación:

¿Sabía que el plomo podría estar presente en su casa? 🏠

Las casas más antiguas pueden tener pintura con plomo. Cuando la pintura se descascara, se desprende o genera polvo, puede poner a los niños pequeños en riesgo de exposición al plomo.

Incluso cantidades pequeñas de plomo pueden afectar el crecimiento y el desarrollo de un niño. No hay ningún nivel de plomo en la sangre de un niño que sea seguro. Obtenga más información en Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Social Media Posts - Lead Poisoning Prevention Tips



[Click here to access the graphic.]

Sample caption:

Lead isn't just found in old paint. Some household items, including water crocks, dishes and cookware, may contain lead. Be especially cautious with items that are worn, antique, handmade, made of crystal, purchased from discount stores or flea markets, or made outside the U.S.

Avoid using these items for food or drinks unless they've been tested and found to be lead-free. Keep potentially unsafe items away from children, and wash your hands thoroughly after handling them.

Learn more about protecting your family from lead exposure:
Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Publicaciones para redes sociales: consejos para prevenir la intoxicación por plomo



Haga clic aquí para ver el gráfico.

Ejemplo de texto para la publicación:

El plomo no solo está en la pintura vieja. Algunos artículos de la casa, como las vasijas para agua, los platos y los utensilios de cocina, pueden contener plomo. Tenga especial cuidado con los artículos desgastados, antiguos, hechos a mano, de cristal, comprados en tiendas de descuento o mercados de pulgas, o fabricados fuera de los EE. UU.

Evite usar estos artículos para alimentos o bebidas, a menos que se hayan analizado y se haya comprobado que no tienen plomo. Mantenga los artículos que podrían ser peligrosos lejos de los niños, y lávese bien las manos después de tocarlos. Obtenga más información sobre cómo proteger a su familia de la exposición al plomo: Lead-SafeCookCounty.com

Palm Cards in English, Spanish, and Hindi

This 5” x 7” double-sided palm card highlights common sources of lead exposure, including lead-based paint in homes built before 1978 and certain household items. It also provides information on Illinois' childhood lead testing requirements at 12 and 24 months, encourages families to speak with their child's healthcare provider about lead testing and includes a QR code to learn more about lead poisoning prevention.

Download **Click links below to download this palm card in:**
English | Spanish | Hindi







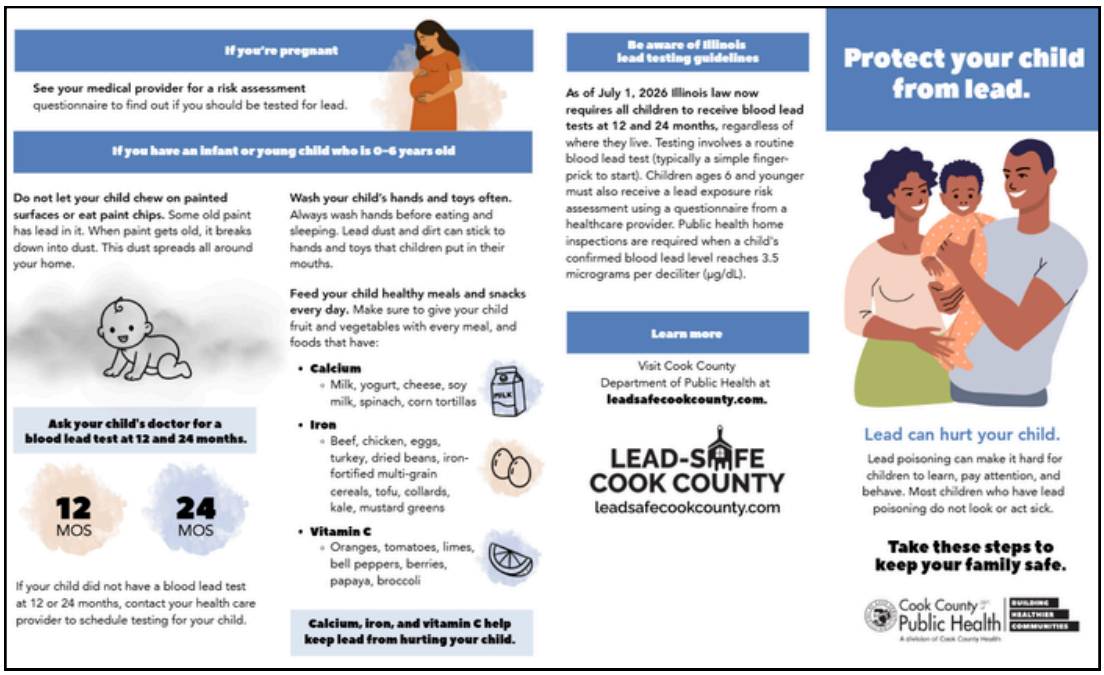


Brochures in English, Spanish, and Hindi

This 14” x 8.5” brochure provides information about lead poisoning prevention, including common sources of lead exposure, the importance of blood lead testing for children at 12 and 24 months, Illinois lead testing guidelines, and simple steps families can take to reduce exposure to lead in their homes, workplaces and everyday products. It also includes nutrition tips to help protect children from the harmful effects of lead.

Download

Click links below to download this brochure in:
English | Spanish | Hindi



If you're pregnant

See your medical provider for a risk assessment questionnaire to find out if you should be tested for lead.

If you have an infant or young child who is 0–6 years old

Do not let your child chew on painted surfaces or eat paint chips. Some old paint has lead in it. When paint gets old, it breaks down into dust. This dust spreads all around your home.

Ask your child's doctor for a blood lead test at 12 and 24 months.

12 MOS **24** MOS

If your child did not have a blood lead test at 12 or 24 months, contact your health care provider to schedule testing for your child.

Wash your child's hands and toys often. Always wash hands before eating and sleeping. Lead dust and dirt can stick to hands and toys that children put in their mouths.

Feed your child healthy meals and snacks every day. Make sure to give your child fruit and vegetables with every meal, and foods that have:

- **Calcium**
  - Milk, yogurt, cheese, soy milk, spinach, corn tortillas
- **Iron**
  - Beef, chicken, eggs, turkey, dried beans, iron-fortified multi-grain cereals, tofu, collards, kale, mustard greens
- **Vitamin C**
  - Oranges, tomatoes, limes, bell peppers, berries, papaya, broccoli

Calcium, iron, and vitamin C help keep lead from hurting your child.

Be aware of Illinois lead testing guidelines

As of July 1, 2026 Illinois law now requires all children to receive blood lead tests at 12 and 24 months, regardless of where they live. Testing involves a routine blood lead test (typically a simple finger-prick to start). Children ages 6 and younger must also receive a lead exposure risk assessment using a questionnaire from a healthcare provider. Public health home inspections are required when a child's confirmed blood lead level reaches 3.5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL).

Learn more

Visit Cook County Department of Public Health at **leadsafecookcounty.com.**

LEAD-SAFE COOK COUNTY
leadsafecookcounty.com

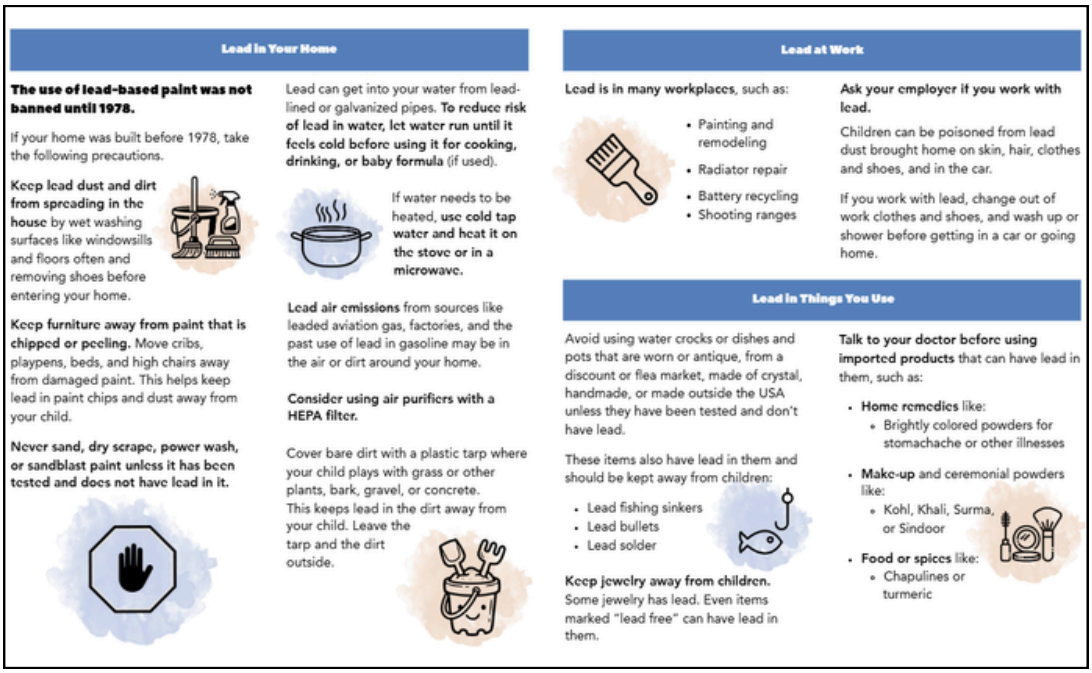
Protect your child from lead.

Lead can hurt your child.

Lead poisoning can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention, and behave. Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick.

Take these steps to keep your family safe.

Cook County Public Health — Building Healthier Communities — A division of Cook County Health



Lead in Your Home

The use of lead-based paint was not banned until 1978.

If your home was built before 1978, take the following precautions.

Keep lead dust and dirt from spreading in the house by wet washing surfaces like windowsills and floors often and removing shoes before entering your home.

Keep furniture away from paint that is chipped or peeling. Move cribs, playpens, beds, and high chairs away from damaged paint. This helps keep lead in paint chips and dust away from your child.

Never sand, dry scrape, power wash, or sandblast paint unless it has been tested and does not have lead in it.

Lead can get into your water from lead-lined or galvanized pipes. **To reduce risk of lead in water, let water run until it feels cold before using it for cooking, drinking, or baby formula** (if used).

If water needs to be heated, **use cold tap water and heat it on the stove or in a microwave.**

Lead air emissions from sources like leaded aviation gas, factories, and the past use of lead in gasoline may be in the air or dirt around your home.

Consider using air purifiers with a HEPA filter.

Cover bare dirt with a plastic tarp where your child plays with grass or other plants, bark, gravel, or concrete. This keeps lead in the dirt away from your child. Leave the tarp and the dirt outside.

Lead at Work

Lead is in many workplaces, such as:

- Painting and remodeling
- Radiator repair
- Battery recycling
- Shooting ranges

Ask your employer if you work with lead.

Children can be poisoned from lead dust brought home on skin, hair, clothes and shoes, and in the car.

If you work with lead, change out of work clothes and shoes, and wash up or shower before getting in a car or going home.

Lead in Things You Use

Avoid using water crocks or dishes and pots that are worn or antique, from a discount or flea market, made of crystal, handmade, or made outside the USA unless they have been tested and don't have lead.

These items also have lead in them and should be kept away from children:

- Lead fishing sinkers
- Lead bullets
- Lead solder

Keep jewelry away from children. Some jewelry has lead. Even items marked "lead free" can have lead in them.

Talk to your doctor before using imported products that can have lead in them, such as:

- **Home remedies** like:
  - Brightly colored powders for stomachache or other illnesses
- **Make-up** and ceremonial powders like:
  - Kohl, Khali, Surma, or Sindoor
- **Food or spices** like:
  - Chapulines or turmeric

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Sample Blog Post - English

Cook County Public Health Encourages Parents to Get Children Tested and Learn How to Prevent Lead Exposure

A new Illinois law requires all children to receive blood lead tests at ages 1 and 2, regardless of where they live. The law, which took effect July 1, 2026, also requires lead exposure risk assessments for children ages 6 and younger.

Lead exposure can lower a child's IQ and cause learning, speech and behavioral problems. Children living in homes built before 1978 are especially at risk due to lead-based paint and dust. More than two-thirds of Cook County homes were built before 1978.

Public health intervention is now required when a child's confirmed venous blood lead level reaches 3.5 micrograms per deciliter. Cook County Department of Public Health offers home nursing visits, free lead inspections and home repairs for eligible families. A waiting list currently exists for these services.

Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's healthcare provider about lead testing and prevention.

For more information about lead poisoning prevention, visit Lead-SafeCookCounty.com.

Sample Blog Post - Spanish

Salud Pública de Cook County (Cook County Public Health) anima a los padres a hacerles la prueba de plomo a sus hijos y a aprender cómo prevenir la exposición al plomo

Una nueva ley de Illinois exige que todos los niños se hagan análisis de plomo en la sangre a los 1 y 2 años de edad, sin importar dónde vivan. La ley, que entró en vigor el 1 de julio de 2026, también exige evaluaciones del riesgo de exposición al plomo para los niños de 6 años o menos.

La exposición al plomo puede bajar el coeficiente intelectual de un niño y causar problemas de aprendizaje, del habla y de conducta. Los niños que viven en casas construidas antes de 1978 corren un riesgo especial por la pintura y el polvo con plomo. Más de dos tercios de las viviendas de Cook County se construyeron antes de 1978.

Ahora se requiere una intervención de salud pública cuando el nivel de plomo confirmado en la sangre venosa de un niño llega a 3.5 microgramos por decilitro. El Departamento de Salud Pública de Cook County (Cook County Department of Public Health) ofrece visitas de enfermería en casa, inspecciones de plomo gratuitas y reparaciones en la vivienda para las familias que califican. Actualmente hay una lista de espera para estos servicios.

Se anima a los padres a hablar con el proveedor de atención médica de su hijo sobre la prueba de plomo y la prevención.

Para obtener más información sobre la prevención de la intoxicación por plomo, visite: Lead-SafeCookCounty.com.