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# Understanding Your Lead Investigation

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## ***Who are we?***

We are Lead Investigators from the local health department. By allowing us into your home, we will be able to tell you where there are lead hazards that are harmful to your child.

***Call us when you get our report. We will help you understand what you need to do to keep your child safe from lead.***



## ***What hazards did we find?***

We tested every painted surface in your home looking for lead. We also tested for lead in dust and soil. We will send you a report in about a month that tells you where there are lead hazards in your home.

## ***Why is lead so dangerous to small children?***

Even a small amount of lead can be toxic to small children. The effects of lead poisoning don't show up like other diseases. You can't tell if someone is lead poisoned just by looking at them.

## ***What are the effects of lead poisoning?***

- ◇ Damage to the brain and kidneys
- ◇ Learning disabilities
- ◇ Speech and language problems
- ◇ Hyperactivity
- ◇ Decreased growth

## ***How did my child get lead poisoned?***

If you live in a house that was built before 1978, it could contain lead paint.

**Windows, doors, or other parts of the house** with lead paint can create lead dust. Young children and babies get lead dust on their hands and in their mouths. Lead can also be in the **soil outside**. We tested for lead in dust and soil so you will know what areas of your home are unsafe.

## ***What can I do to help my child learn?***

- Read out loud with your child
- Play memory games
- Drawing or finger painting
- Swimming or other physical activity

# 7 steps to keep your child safe from lead

1. Wash your child's hands often—every time they play on the floor or outside, before they eat, and before they take naps or go to sleep
2. Wash toys, pacifiers, and bottles every day
3. Have everyone take off their shoes when coming inside
4. Do not let your child chew on or pick at any painted surfaces
5. Have a room for your child to play in that is always clean and dust-free
6. Have your doctor retest your child's blood lead level or follow your nurse's advice for how often to retest
7. Make all of your child's meals low in fat and high in Vitamin C, calcium, and iron. Good foods include:



- ◇ Low-fat milk and yogurt
- ◇ Spinach, kale, or collard greens
- ◇ Tomatoes
- ◇ Oranges
- ◇ Lean chicken, fish, or red meat
- ◇ Iron-fortified cereal

## ***How do I know how lead poisoning has affected my child?***

You can't know how lead has affected your child by looking at them. Lead poisoning can cause learning problems that make school difficult. There are programs that can help make sure your child is ready to start school:



- **Early On** is a program that works with you to understand how lead poisoning has affected your child's learning. Call 1-800-327-5966 or visit [www.1800earlyon.org](http://www.1800earlyon.org) to find programs near you.
- **Head Start** prepares young children for school. Call 2-1-1 or visit [www.michheadstart.org](http://www.michheadstart.org) to get information on early learning programs in your area.

## **5 steps to keep your home safe from lead**

1. Clean up all paint chips immediately
2. Every week, clean floors, window frames and window sills, and other surfaces with three steps
  - ◇ Use a HEPA vacuum to clean surfaces of dust
  - ◇ Use paper towels with soap and warm water to wipe dusty surfaces
  - ◇ Start with a new paper towel for each surface being cleaned
  - ◇ Use a HEPA vacuum again to remove all lead dust
3. Only use a vacuum with a HEPA filter—other vacuums will only spread lead dust
4. Have everyone take shoes off at the door and use a door mat for when you come inside
5. See if your house qualifies for the Lead-Safe Home Program

***Be very careful if you remove lead paint yourself - doing it wrong will make the problem worse!***

# Help making your home lead-safe:

The **Lead-Safe Home Program** is a program we work with at the Michigan Department of Community Health. It helps people afford to fix lead hazards in the home.

For owner-occupied properties, the program can provide up to \$8000. You may have to contribute up to \$350 yourself to fix the problems.

Landlords can receive up to \$2,000 - \$6,000 per unit to fix lead hazards, based on the number of units in the property. If lead work costs more than that, landlords are required to pay any costs above the maximum amount provided, or \$300 per unit if costs do not exceed maximum amount provided.

Your family must be low or middle-income and your property taxes must be current.

Download an application for the program at: [www.michigan.gov/leadsafe](http://www.michigan.gov/leadsafe)

Or you can call (866) 691-5323 to have one mailed to you.

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## Questions from home occupants:

### Homeowners:

#### ***What am I required to do?***

Following our recommendations is the best way to keep your child safe. Your home is your property. By law, you are not required to fix the lead hazards in your home.



### Renters:

#### ***What does my landlord have to do?***

We will send a copy of our report to your landlord. Michigan law says that your landlord must fix all the lead hazards we find.

#### ***Can my landlord kick me out because my child is lead poisoned?***

No, your landlord can't evict you for having a lead-poisoned child.