Potential Health Effects of Lead

Lead poisoning signs and symptoms in children may include:

- Developmental delay
- Learning difficulties
- Irritability
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Sluggishness and fatigue
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Hearing loss
- Seizures
- Eating things, such as paint chips, that aren't food (pica)

Lead poisoning signs and symptoms in adults may include:

- High blood pressure
- Joint and muscle pain
- Difficulties with memory or concentration
- Headache
- Abdominal pain
- Mood disorders
- Reduced sperm count and abnormal sperm
- Miscarriage, stillbirth or premature birth in pregnant women

Exposure to lead is measured with a blood test. Talk with your doctor about getting a lead test for you or your child if:

- You believe you have been exposed to lead
- You are at risk of lead exposure

Protection for workers exposed to lead

The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration has established lead standards for workers in general industrial and construction jobs. Both standards define minimum safety precautions that employers must provide for employees exposed to lead on the job. For more information go to www.michigan.gov/miosha.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

517-335-8885 or visit www.michigan.gov/lead

MICHIGAN Childhood LEAD POISONING prevention program

MDHHS Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

Take-home Lead: A Preventable Risk for Your Family

Take-home lead: a hazard for children and adults

Exposure to lead can have serious health effects for both children and adults. Children under the age of six, pregnant women or a developing fetus can experience particularly dangerous health effects from lead exposure.

Adults employed in occupations like construction or lead smelting, as well as those with hobbies such as refinishing antiques or making ammunition from lead shot, can be exposed to lead. Lead dust can be carried home on their clothes, shoes, skin and hair. Lead dust can also contaminate their vehicles. This lead dust can be passed on to children and other family members. “Take-home” lead can have adverse effects on children’s and adults’ health. Adults who work with lead can take certain safety precautions to protect themselves and their families from take-home lead.

Job- or hobby-related lead exposures don’t have to go home with the working adult. The following steps can prevent take-home lead from becoming a family-wide concern.

- Don’t eat, drink or smoke on the job.
- Wash hands before eating, drinking, smoking or touching your face.
- Wear the proper protective equipment on the job, including a respirator.
- Shower, wash your hair and change into clean clothes before leaving work.
- Store street clothes in a separate locker from your work clothes.
- Wash work clothes separately from other laundry. After washing lead-contaminated clothing and removing them from the machine, run the rinse cycle once before using the washing machine again.
- Eat a well-balanced diet. Lead is more easily absorbed on an empty stomach. Proper nutrition can help reduce and prevent the absorption of lead.
- Get regular blood lead tests if you work in a lead-related job or have a hobby involving the use of lead.

Jobs or hobbies associated with take-home lead:

- Battery manufacture
- Construction and demolition, including abrasive blasting
- Radiator repair
- Lead smelting
- Lead, brass or bronze casting
- Foundry operations
- Ceramic and plastic manufacture
- Fishing tackle manufacture
- Firing range instructor or janitor
- Bridge construction or repair
- Home remodeling or renovation
- Ammunition/bullet manufacture
- Plumbing and pipefitting
- Soldering of electrical circuits
- Stained glass making
- Antique refinishing