

# PREGNANT AND NURSING MOTHERS



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEAD POISONING

### What causes lead poisoning?

There are many factors that can put a pregnant woman or nursing mother at risk for lead poisoning.

In Michigan, lead paint is still the #1 cause of lead poisoning. It is often found in homes built before 1978, and the older the home, the more likely that painted surfaces like windows, cupboards, doors and porches will contain lead paint.

Other sources of exposure may include soil, water or jobs and hobbies using lead such as factory work, soldering, ammunitions or jewelry making. Some pottery glazes, imported spices and home remedies may also contain lead.

### Should I get tested?

Routine blood testing is NOT recommended for all pregnant women or nursing mothers. Talk to your doctor or local health department to learn more.

### If I test positive for lead poisoning can I continue to breastfeed?



In most cases, breastfeeding is safe. However, if your blood lead level goes above 40 ug/dl or your level is greater than 20 ug/dl and your baby has a level above 5 ug/dl, you should talk with your doctor about continuing to breastfeed.



### What can I do to protect myself from lead?

- Wash hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often.
- Always take off shoes before going into the house.
- Flush your pipes before drinking, and only use cold water for drinking or mixing formula. Flush pipes by running the water for approximately 5 minutes.
- Watch your diet carefully. Foods high in calcium and iron help keep lead from being absorbed by your body.
- Avoid using power sanders, open-flame torches, heat guns, dry scrapers and dry sandpaper on painted surfaces.
- Paint over peeling or chipping paint.
- Use a certified Repair and Remodeling Professional when making updates to your home.
- Practice safe cleaning methods.

To learn more about lead poisoning prevention and blood lead testing, call:

**(888) 322-4453**

