



Universal Blood Lead Testing: Questions and Answers for Parents, Caregivers and the Public

In October 2023, Michigan passed a law that requires all children to be tested for lead in blood at 12 months and 24 months of age and at other ages depending on certain risk factors. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) was required to develop administrative rules for implementation of the law. These rules went into effect April 30, 2025.

The following questions and answers provide information about the laws.

What is a blood lead test and what does it measure?

- A blood lead test measures the amount of lead in a person's blood. Visit [Blood Lead Testing](#) to learn about the different types of tests and what it means to have an elevated blood lead level.

What is universal blood lead testing?

- Universal blood lead testing means testing all children at certain ages.

What is required under Michigan's new universal blood lead testing laws?

- It is the physician's responsibility to test or order the test.
- Michigan children must be tested at 12 months and 24 months of age or by 72 months of age (age 6) if there is no record of a previous test.
- Children must also be tested as follows:
 - Between 48 months and 60 months of age (age 4) if they live in one of the 82 cities and townships designated by MDHHS as high risk. Visit [Additional Blood Lead Testing for High-Risk Jurisdictions](#) to view the complete list.
 - At least once between their most recent test and age 72 months if they are at high risk because they live in a home that either:

- Was built before 1978, or
 - Where other children with elevated blood lead levels live.
- Within three months of when a physician or parent determines that they are at high risk. Risk factors to consider are described at [MDHHS Quick Reference Guide for Providers](#).
- Testing requirements do not apply if the parent/guardian objects to the test.

The law specifies the required ages for testing in months of age. Does testing have to take place at exactly these months to comply with the law?

- Annual well-child visits do not always happen exactly on a child's birth month; therefore, a blood lead test could be done at or **around** specified months.
- Talk with your child's primary healthcare provider about getting a blood lead test for your child.

How can children who do not currently have a healthcare provider receive blood lead testing?

- If you do not have a healthcare provider, [contact your local health department](#) to discuss their available services for blood lead testing.

Will health insurers cover the costs of the blood lead tests under these new mandates?

- Blood lead testing is a preventive health service under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), meaning it must be covered without additional copayment or coinsurance charges. Most private insurers are covered by the ACA.

What are the reasons for requiring universal testing?

- Children and fetuses are most at risk of health effects from lead exposure. There is no known safe level of lead in a child's blood. Lead exposure can come from many sources including paint in homes built before 1978, dust, soil, drinking water from older plumbing, jobs or hobbies that involve lead and some imported goods. Universal testing aims to identify all children with elevated blood lead levels as early as possible as children begin to explore their environment. It is important to find and fix lead hazards in a child's environment to prevent lead exposure. MDHHS recommends that Michigan households use a certified lead-reducing drinking water filter if your home has or if you are uncertain if it has lead or galvanized plumbing, a lead service line carrying water from the street to their residence, or old faucets and fittings that were sold before 2014. Learn more about the health effects of lead exposure by visiting [Lead and Your Health](#).
- Professionals in child lead poisoning prevention agree that the targeted testing approach (see below) does not achieve this goal. Other states have already moved from targeted testing policies to mandated universal testing for similar reasons.

Why should children be tested at 12 months and 24 months of age, or between 24 months and 72 months (age 6) if not tested previously?

- Testing at 12 months and 24 months helps identify early exposure. Blood lead levels peak around 24 months when children become more mobile, use hand-to-mouth movements and explore their environments, all of which put them a greater risk of lead exposure.
 - Testing at these ages allows for early detection of lead exposure and intervention.
 - The catch-up provision of testing by age 6, if not tested previously, helps ensure that children with elevated blood lead levels can be identified.

How will the change to universal blood lead testing impact the number of children who have blood lead tests?

- The universal blood lead testing approach will increase the number of children tested and, therefore, identify more children with lead exposure.

Where can the public go to learn more about blood lead testing, risk factors for lead exposure and lead exposure prevention?

- Visit Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe.

Where can the public read the two laws related to universal blood lead testing of children and the administrative rules that provide additional details about the requirements?

- [Public Act 146 of 2023](#) amends Part 54A of the Public Health Code by adding a new subsection, [MCL 333.5474d](#), that requires a physician to test or order a blood lead test at age 12 months and 24 months and under several other circumstances and to make an entry of the testing on the minor's certificate of immunization.
- [Public Act 145 of 2023](#) amends MCL 333.9206 by adding a requirement for the entry of the blood lead test on a minor's certificate of immunization in subsection [9206\(1\)](#).
- Administrative rules are posted at [R 330-301-304](#).

For more information about the universal blood lead testing requirements, contact the MDHHS Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 517-335-8885 or MDHHS-CLPPP@michigan.gov.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) does not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, national origin, color, sex, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, partisan considerations, or genetic information. Sex-based discrimination includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, and pregnancy.