

- **If you work with lead.**

Wash hands, face and hair, and change clothes before leaving work. Wash clothes separately, rinse the washing machine afterwards.

- **Take care with traditional medicines, cosmetics, ceramic and cookware.**

Medicines like alkohol, some ayurvedic tonics, bali goli, cebagin, cordyceps, farouk, greta, poying tan, pay loo-ah or samtrin may contain lead, as can cosmetics such as kohl, surma, saoti, some imported face powders, henna and hair dyes. Because pottery and cookware from developing countries may contain lead, don't store or prepare food in it.

To find out about blood tests for lead, ask your doctor. Information on lead is available in Macedonian, Turkish, Mandarin, Arabic, Spanish. Korean, \*\* Vietnamese and English by calling the Pollution Line on 131555. Information about expert removal of lead paint is available from the Lead Advisory Service on 1800 626 086 .If you have difficulty with English, call the Translating and Information service on 131 450 to help you make these calls.

Telephone numbers are correct at time of publication but are not continually updated. You may need to check the numbers in the telephone directory.

## Lead and health - is your family at risk?

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Thanks to unleaded petrol, there's now less lead in our environment. But it's still a big problem. Lead can be in polluted air, older paints, solder, some building materials and even some products we use every day. Because lead can be harmful if it gets into the body, it's important to know how to protect yourself.

Lead gets inside us when we breathe in air containing lead dust, eat food or drink water contaminated with lead. In children under four it gets inside them when they put their hands or toys covered with lead dust in their mouths (this dust is easily picked up from the ground).

What harm does lead do? It can affect developing brains of young children, causing learning and attention problems, hearing loss, slowed growth and behaviour problems. If too much gets into the bodies of pregnant women, it can affect unborn babies. In adults, it can cause joint and muscle pain, high blood pressure and infertility, memory loss and even fits.

Who else is at risk? Anyone working with lead (eg lead mining, smelting and processing, automotive body or radiator repairers, welders, metal workers, plumbers, building, construction or demolition workers, painters, foundry workers, home renovators, people using lead in hobbies.) Lead industry workers may bring lead dust home on their clothes. People living near lead industries are at risk, as is anyone exposed to old paint and dust in older houses. (Although there's little lead in modern paint, house paints made before 1970 contained a lot. There may be old paint hidden under newer paint in your house.)

## Ways to protect yourself against lead:

- **Eat healthy food.**

People absorb more lead if their diet is low in zinc, iron, or calcium, but high in fat. Good foods are eggs, lean red meat, liver, cereals, beans, dark green leafy vegetables, yeast products, nuts, crab, dairy products, tahini, beancurd, soymilk (fortified with calcium) and canned fish with edible bones. Feed children healthy meals and snacks regularly (empty stomachs absorb more lead). Remind them to wash hands before eating and sleeping.

- **Reduce dust at home.**

Wet- wash floors, stairs, windows with detergent weekly. Seal cracks and ceiling cavities to stop contaminated dust coming through.

- **Make play areas and toys safe.**

Keep play areas away from bare soil. Try to keep children out of soil. Cover soil with plants or grass. Keep dummies, toys and pets clean.

- **Take care with homes built before 1970.**

Check for old or peeling paint. Paint carefully over old paint (Don't scrape it off. Lead paint should be removed only by experts - see below). If you renovate, pregnant women and children should move out until everything is finished and cleaned up. Use safety masks and coveralls; move or cover soft furnishings in the work area; don't use blowtorches on lead paint; because sanding or scraping produces lead dust, wet the surface to be sanded or scraped first, and keep dust within work areas by sealing off with plastic sheeting. Clean waste up carefully and dispose of in sealed plastic bags.