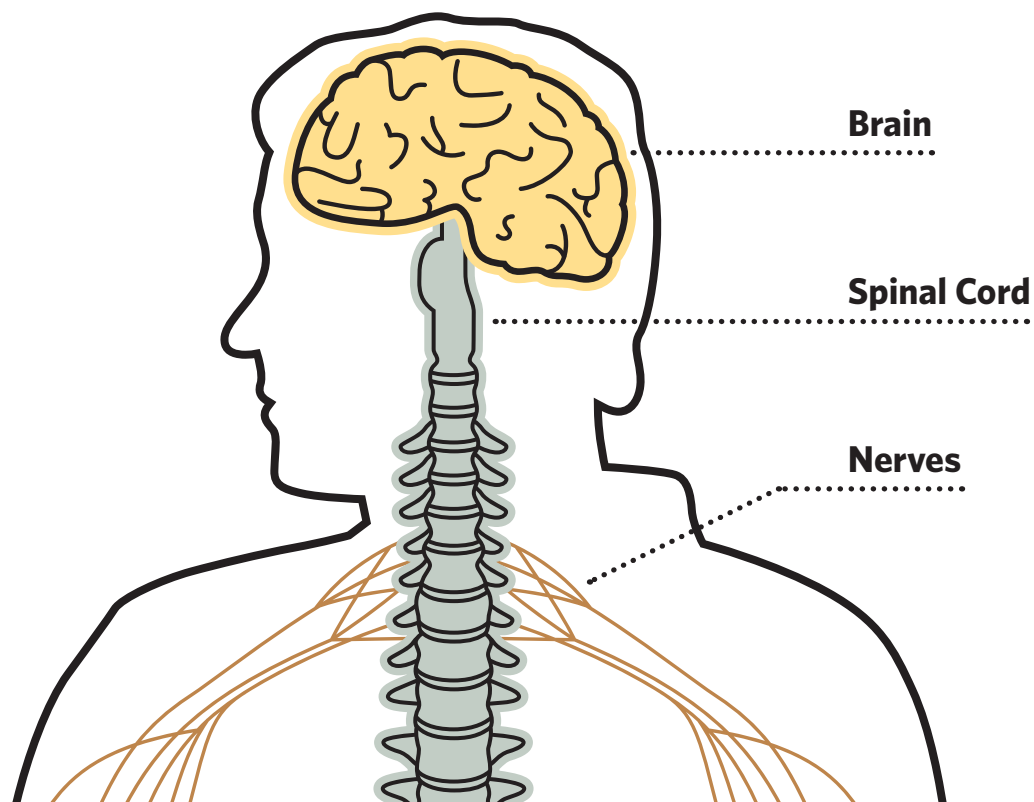


Learn about Lead Poisoning

Swallowing or breathing in lead causes lead poisoning. Lead harms children between the ages of 0 and 6 years old. If you are pregnant, lead may also harm your baby.

Lead hurts the brain and other parts of the nervous system. Some of the health problems caused by lead poisoning may never go away. Lead in a child's body can:

- ▶ Slow down growth and development
- ▶ Damage hearing and speech
- ▶ Cause behavior problems
- ▶ Make it hard to pay attention and learn



Nervous System

How do children get lead poisoning?

Most children get lead poisoning from living or staying in older homes that have lead paint. Many homes built before 1978 have lead paint on the inside and outside of the building.

When old paint cracks and peels, it makes lead dust. Children get lead poisoning from swallowing dust on their hands and toys. Children can also breathe in lead dust.

Lead is also found in:

- ▶ Soil and tap water
- ▶ Toys and toy jewelry
- ▶ Pots or containers, candy, and folk medicine made in other countries
- ▶ Work places where auto repair, construction, and plumbing are done

Most children get lead poisoning from lead dust on their hands and toys.

How do I know if my child has lead poisoning?

A lead test is the only way to know if your child has lead poisoning.

In a lead test, a blood sample is taken from your child's finger or arm. The test measures how much lead is in the blood.

Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick.

Protect Your Child from Lead

Here are steps you can take to protect your child from lead:

1. Test your home for lead.

- ▶ The most important step is to find and remove or cover the lead in your home as soon as possible.

2. Keep children away from lead paint.

- ▶ Use contact paper or duct tape to cover loose paint around windows and walls, or put furniture in front of peeling paint.
- ▶ Wash hands and toys with soap and water.
- ▶ Use a wet paper towel or sponge to wipe up lead dust around windows and floors.

3. Give your child healthy foods.

- ▶ Look for foods with calcium, iron, and vitamin C. These foods can help keep lead out of the body.
- ▶ Feed your child healthy snacks like fresh fruit, cheese, and whole-wheat crackers.



4. Renovate safely.

- ▶ Keep children and pregnant women away from the work area.
- ▶ If you are hiring workers, make sure they have been trained in lead-safe work practices.
- ▶ If you are doing the work yourself, take a training course in lead-safe work practices.

Get Support

Dealing with lead poisoning can be stressful. You may be worried about your child's health.

Here are some tips to help you cope:

Make a plan with your doctor and/or social worker.

You can work together to find the best treatment for your child. Be sure to ask questions if you don't understand something.

Get informed.

Sometimes a doctor or nurse is the best source of information. Or you can contact the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in your area. You may want to talk to other parents who have children with lead poisoning.

Share how you are feeling with your family and friends.

Remember to ask for help and support.



Key Words

These words are often used together. Look up their meanings in the list of words from A to Z.

Words about how lead gets into the body

Absorb	Ingest
Concentration	Inhale
Exposure	

Words about testing your child for lead

Blood Lead Level	Micrograms per Deciliter
Blood Lead Test	Pb
Blood Sample	Pediatrician
Capillary Sample	Risk
Elevated Blood Lead Level	Risk Factor
Lead Poisoning	Screening
Level of Concern	Venous Sample

Words at the doctor

Anemia	Prenatal
Chronic	Risk
Lead Poisoning	Symptom
Pediatrician	Treatment
Pica	Trimester