

# Lead Poisoning: Do I need to worry?

Take this quiz to find out.

Lead Tipsheet #10



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If you checked any box, ask your child's doctor about a blood test for your child.

If your child is younger than 6 years, check all that are true on this list.

- The place where I live was built before 1950.
- The place where I live was built before 1978, and has been painted or renovated recently.
- My child is on MaineCare.
- Someone who lives with me may work with lead. Examples: house painters, contractors, metal recyclers.
- My child has a brother, sister or neighbor who has had lead poisoning.
- My child or I were born in another country.
- My child puts lots of things that are not food in their mouth.

## What's so bad about lead?

Lead can cause:

- Learning disabilities
- Behavior problems
- Lower intelligence
- Hearing damage
- Language or speech delays

## How do I know if my child has lead poisoning?

The only way to tell is to get a blood test. Most kids with lead poisoning don't look or act sick.

## How does lead poisoning happen?

Dust from lead paint in older homes is almost always the cause of lead poisoning.

Lead dust collects on floors and in places where kids put their hands and play with toys. Children, especially those under age 3, often put their hands and toys in their mouths. This makes it very easy for lead dust to get into and damage their growing bodies.

## How can I keep my child safe?

- ✓ Check painted windows, doors and floors for peeling or chipping paint.
- ✓ Clean floors, windowsills and tabletops with wet mops or rags once a week.
- ✓ Wash your child's hands before eating or sleeping.
- ✓ Wash toys once a week.
- ✓ Don't let your child eat food that falls on the floor.
- ✓ Wash pacifiers and bottles if they fall on the floor before giving them to your child.
- ✓ If you are fixing up your home, learn how to control lead dust before you begin. Or hire an "EPA-certified RRP contractor" to do the work.
- ✓ If you work with lead at your job, change your clothes and take a shower before touching your child. Wash your work clothes separately from family laundry.

## Protect your family.

- Check this website: [www.maine.gov/healthyhomes](http://www.maine.gov/healthyhomes)
- Call for advice: 1-866-292-3474 • TTY: 800-606-0215



Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

An Office of the Department of Health and Human Services

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