A blood lead test is the only way to know if your child has lead in them.

Toddlers at ages 1 and 2 are more likely to be around lead. They can get lead dust or lead paint chips into their bodies because they often put their hands, toys or other things in their mouths. They also play where lead dust may be – like on floors and near window sills.

Lead was used in paint. Paint bought today does not have lead in it. Older houses often still have old lead paint in them. Dust from old paint is the most common way children get lead poisoning.

Talk with your doctor about a blood lead test for your child.

The doctor should ask questions about the age of houses where your child spends more than 10 hours each week, whether any of these houses have been recently renovated and whether you or someone who spends time with your child works with lead.

- 1- and 2-year-olds should have a blood lead test. MaineCare requires it. Parents can ask their doctor to test their children for lead.
- Children who are 3 to 6 years old may also need a blood lead test. Test your child if you have moved to an older building, your child has never been tested, or if there has been recent repairs to your home.
- If your child often swallows things that aren't food, or chews on window sills, talk to your doctor about getting a blood lead test.

How is a blood lead test done?

A child's blood test can be either a finger or toe prick (capillary test) or by drawing blood from a vein (venous test).

Some blood lead tests are done right in the doctor’s office. Other doctors may give you a lab slip to have the blood test done at a lab. Bring this paper to the lab when your child goes for the lead test.

Ask your doctor for the results. If the blood lead test is high, there are things you can do to help your child. Call the Lead Program to find out how: 866-292-3474 (toll-free in Maine) or 287-4311.

If you have more questions, if your child needs a test, or if you need help understanding what the results mean, contact the Lead Program using the phone number or website listed below.

Protect your family.

- Check this website: maine.gov/healthyhomes
- Call for advice: 866-292-3474 • TTY: Call Maine Relay 711