Get your child tested.

Even children who appear healthy may have high levels of lead. You can't tell if a child has lead poisoning unless you have him or her tested. A blood test takes only ten minutes, and results should be ready within a week.

Children should be tested under your state or local screening plan. To find out where to have your child tested, call your doctor or local health clinic. They can explain what the test results mean, and if more testing will be needed.

Keep it clean.

Ordinary dust and dirt may contain lead. Children can swallow lead or breathe lead contaminated dust if they play in dust or dirt and then put their fingers or toys in their mouths, or if they eat without washing their hands first.

Keep the areas where your children play as dust-free and clean as possible.

Wash pacifiers and bottles after they fall on the floor. Keep extra hands.

Clean floors, window frames, window sills, and other surfaces weekly. Use a mop, sponge, or paper towel with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner or a cleaner made specifically for lead. REMEMBER: NEVER MIX AMMONIA AND BLEACH PRODUCTS TOGETHER SINCE THEY CAN FORM A DANGEROUS GAS.

Thoroughly rinse sponges and mop heads after cleaning dirty and dusty areas.

Wash toys and stuffed animals regularly.

Make sure your children wash their hands before meals, nap time, and bedtime.

Reduce the risk from lead paint.

Most homes built before 1960 contain leaded paint. Some homes built as recently as 1978 may also contain lead paint. This paint could be on window frames, walls, the outside of your house, or other surfaces. Tiny pieces of peeling or chipping paint are dangerous if eaten. Lead paint in good condition is not usually a problem except in places where painted surfaces rub against each other and create dust. (For example, if you open a window, the painted surfaces rub against each other.)

Make sure your child does not chew on anything covered with lead paint, such as painted window sills, cribs, or playpens.

Don't burn painted wood. It may contain lead.

Don't remove lead paint yourself.

Families have been poisoned by scraping or sanding lead paint because these activities generate large amounts of lead dust. Lead dust from repairs or renovations of older buildings can remain in the building long after the work is completed. Heating paint may release lead into the air.

Ask your local or state health department if they will test your home for lead paint. Some will test for free. Home test kits cannot detect small amounts of lead under some conditions.

Hire a person with special training for correcting lead paint problems to remove lead paint from your home, someone who knows how to do this work safely and has experience.
Protect Your Children From Lead Poisoning

1. Get your child tested for lead poisoning, even if he or she seems healthy.

2. Clean floors, window frames, window sills, and other surfaces weekly. Use a mop, sponge, or paper towel with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner or a cleaner made specifically for lead.

3. Reduce the risk of lead paint. Make sure your child is not chewing on anything covered with lead paint.

4. Don’t try to remove lead paint yourself.

5. Don’t bring lead dust into your home from work or a hobby.

6. Have your water tested. If the cold water hasn’t been used for more than a few hours, let it run for 15–30 seconds before drinking it or cooking with it.

7. Eat right and don’t store food in high-lead pottery.

Lead poisoning is a serious problem for young children—the younger the child, the greater the risk.

For More Information

EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline
1-800-426-4791

National Lead Information Center
1-800-424-LEAD

Visit our web site
http://www.epa.gov/lead

United States Environmental Protection Agency ● Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics ● Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

Recycled/Recyclable — Printed with vegetable oil based inks on recycled paper (30% minimum post-consumer)