

Keep your newborn safe from LEAD



Lead is very dangerous, especially for babies and young children. But even before birth, you can take steps to keep lead out of your home and other places your baby will spend time.

Lead can be found in many places — in and around your home, in the things you use or buy, and on the job. Take these steps to keep yourself and your newborn safe from lead.

Getting your baby's room and your home ready

If your home was built before 1978, there may be lead in the paint inside or outside. Old paint breaks down into dust. Lead in dust spreads all around your home and sticks to hands, toys, and other things that babies suck on. There may also be lead in the dirt around your home from the past use of lead in gasoline and in factories.

Keep furniture away from paint that is chipped or peeling. Move cribs, highchairs, beds, and playpens away from cracked paint and windowsills.

Remodeling or painting? Don't sand, dry scrape, sandblast, or power wash paint unless your paint has been tested and does not have lead in it.



Keep your home clean and dust-free. Wet mop floors, wipe down window sills with a clean, wet cloth, vacuum, and wash all surfaces often.



Always take off shoes or wipe them on a doormat before going inside to keep lead in dirt outside.

Caring for yourself and your newborn

It is very important to keep lead away from your baby and yourself. If you think you may have lead in your body, talk to your doctor. And while you are pregnant, protecting yourself from lead also protects your baby.

Never eat or chew on anything that isn't food, like clay, dirt, or pottery.

Do not eat or drink foods or liquids that were stored or prepared in traditional or imported pottery.



When using water from the faucet for drinking, cooking, or mixing formula:

- Always start with cold tap water and heat as needed.
- Run cold tap water for 30 seconds.
- Do not use water that has been stored in a ceramic water crock or jar.

If you plan to breastfeed and think you may have lead in your body, talk to your doctor.

Toys and other things you buy and use

Make sure toys are lead safe. Some children's toys have lead in them. For a list of toys and other items with lead in them, go to: www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/sources.htm

Wash your newborn's toys, pacifiers, and other items your baby sucks on, often to get rid of lead that's in dust and dirt.

Do not use natural remedies for yourself or your baby unless you know they are safe and do not contain lead.

Lead has been found in some natural remedies used for colic, stomach ache, teething pain, and to heal a newborn's belly button.



Do not use traditional makeup on your newborn or yourself. Products like Kohl, Khali, Surma, and Sindoor, can have lead in them.

Don't take lead home from the job

Your baby can get lead poisoning if someone in your home works with lead at their job. You cannot see the lead, but a worker can bring lead home on their hands, face, work clothes, shoes, and in a car.

Anyone in your home that works around lead should:

- Take a shower and wash their hair at work before going home. If that's not possible, they should shower as soon as they get home.
- Change into clean clothes before leaving work and keep a bag just for dirty work clothes.
- Wash work clothes separate from all other clothes. Keep work shoes outside the house.



Your growing child

Lead can harm your baby's brain, kidneys, and other organs. Most children get tested for lead at 1 and 2 years old. Ask your doctor about testing sooner if you think your child has been exposed to lead.

As your baby grows there are many other things you can do to protect your child from lead. Call your local Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program for more information. For information online, go to www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb