

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

"We must be impatient for change. Let us remember that our voice is a precious gift and we must use it."

-Claudia Flores, Center for American Progress



Lead is a metal that is found in nature and is used in many buildings and products. You have probably heard of lead in house paint and in water. Lead seems to be everywhere! And that's because it can be a fine dust easily kicked up and carried by wind. Sadly, this makes it very easy for us, especially babies and children, to ingest it without knowing it.

POSSIBLE HEALTH CONCERNS OF LEAD

- Can affect brain growth and add to learning problems in infants and young children.
- Can increase blood pressure, decrease kidney function, and cause reproductive problems.
- May increase cancer risk.

Where lead can be found



Chipped and peeling paint and house dust



- Bare soil around homes or near roadways
- Construction materials



Tap water in your home

What you can do to reduce exposure

- First, know your rights! *Massachusetts Lead Law* says landlords have to remove or cover lead paint in any home built before 1978 where a child under 6 years old lives.
- Just in case, keep children away from chipped and peeling paint.
- Dust with a wet cloth to pick up fine dust without pushing it to the floor.

- Make a place for shoes to go after people come in from outside to help cut down on lead in soil being tracked into your home.
- A doormat can really help! Even just wiping the bottoms of shoes and sandals can cut down on lead dust that enters the home.
- Clean floors regularly with a wet mop.

- Use cold water for drinking and cooking. Hot water from the tap can pull out and absorb lead from old pipes and some faucets.
- Wash your and your child's hands often, especially before cooking or eating.
- Eat a balanced diet with enough calcium, iron, and vitamin C, which can help reduce the amount of lead that your body absorbs.