Protect Your Children From Lead Poisoning

Where can I find more information?

The Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead

The Food and Drug Administration
www.fda.gov

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

National Lead Information Center
1-800-424-LEAD (5323)

EPA Regional Office
Region 5
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL. 60604
(312) 886-6003

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

Skokie Health Department
5127 Oakton St.
Skokie, IL. 60077
847-933-8252
Lead Poisoning

What is lead?
Lead is a natural metal and it is a poison. For years lead was used in many common items: paint, gasoline, plumbing. While lead is less common now than it once was, it can still be found in some products today: such as lead-based paint in homes built before 1978, drinking water from pipes that are made of lead or use lead solder, ceramic dishes made with lead, certain spices, and lead hazardous make-up such as Kohl, Surma, Kajal.

Why are young children at greatest risk?
Young children spend a lot of time on the floor. They like to put hands, toys, and other things in their mouths. This increases their chances swallowing lead dust and paint chips. Only a tiny amount of lead is needed to harm a young, growing child.

How can lead poisoning affect my child?
- Reading and learning problems
- Lowered intelligence
- Anemia
- Hearing problems
- Slowed growth
- Behavior problems
- Kidney and liver damage

How are children exposed to paint, soil, lead-based makeup and other products?
The leading source of exposure to lead is lead-based paint. This was outlawed for residential use in 1978, but still remains in some older homes. The main hazard is paint dust. Paint dust enters the air when old paint is scraped, sanded or begins to flake.

In some cultures, it is common for parents to apply certain lead-based makeup products to the eyes of infants and children. Infants of mothers who use these products sometimes have elevated levels of lead in their blood.

Although many spices can contain lead, turmeric is the most commonly contaminated spice. Make sure your turmeric is bright yellow, not orange or red.

Soil around homes and apartment buildings may contain lead. Children may come into contact with lead by playing in bare dirt. Lead in the soil may get on vegetables planted in the garden.

How to protect children from lead

DO:
- Check your home for peeling paint, paint chips and dust on floors and window sills.
- Wash toys, stuffed animals, bottles and pacifiers often to remove lead dust.
- Provide meals high in iron, calcium and vitamin C, which help prevent young bodies from absorbing lead.
- Use cold water for drinking, cooking or making baby formula.
- Have your child play on grass instead of bare soil. Provide a sandbox with lead-free sand.

DO NOT:
- Do not use home remedies or cosmetics that may contain lead.
- Do not use imported, old, or handmade pottery to cook, store or serve food or drinks.
- Do not use imported cosmetics such as: Kohl, Surma, or Kajal.