

# Frequently Asked Questions About Lead Testing

## What is lead?

Lead is a heavy metal that naturally occurs in the Earth's crust. It is found in paint in homes built before 1978. It can also be found in soil and in water pipes, where it contaminates tap water. It can be toxic to humans and animals.

## Why is it dangerous and is my child at risk?

There is no safe level of lead but it is especially damaging to unborn babies and young children younger than three, who absorb it more easily. It can damage the brain and nervous system, affecting children for life.

If your home is old and the exterior or interior paint isn't well-maintained, tiny floating paint chips and dust can put your family at risk. The soil on the street or in your yard may have lead if you live in an area where there was or still is industrial activity.

## Should I get my child tested?

All children on Medicaid are required to get tested. But if you are not on Medicaid and think your children may be at risk, speak to your doctor to have them screened as soon as possible. You may never notice symptoms in your child but the continuous exposure — even at smaller amounts — could lead to irreversible health damage and even lead poisoning.

Call 317-233-1296 or email [Khorsley@isdh.in.gov](mailto:Khorsley@isdh.in.gov) to get more information if you are getting your child tested for the first time.

## What are some symptoms to look out for?

Lead exposure can cause your child to experience headaches, behavioral problems, trouble concentrating on daily tasks, not wanting to eat, nausea and vomiting, constipation and fatigue.

## How can I get my house tested?

Look online for "EPA certified lead inspectors," which will lead to an EPA webpage. There, you can find inspectors in your area. These tests may cost money, so ask about that as you choose the expert.

The health department also offers some free lead testing and fixes through an online application form. Call 317-234-6289 or email [dpugh@ihcda.in.gov](mailto:dpugh@ihcda.in.gov) for more information.