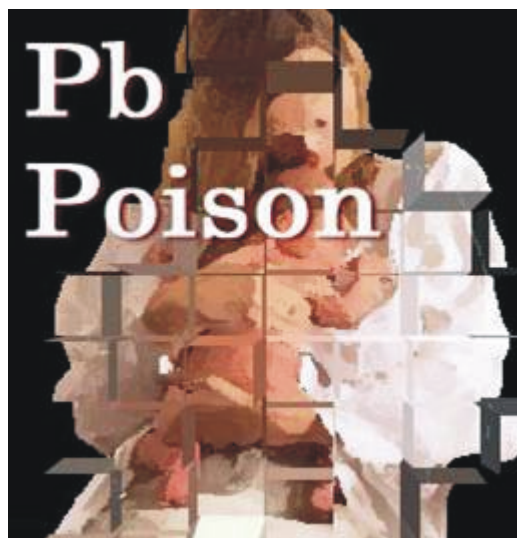


**LEAD TEST**

Home Analysis Services

[www.leadtest.co.uk](http://www.leadtest.co.uk)

0131 669 8770



#### What You Should Know About Lead

Lead is a cumulative toxin because, when ingested or inhaled and absorbed, it can harm many systems in the human body, including the brain, kidney, and the nervous and reproductive systems of both males and females. Lead disrupts enzyme systems mediated by other metals important to the body - iron, calcium and zinc. Lead affects all people and animals, but children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable.

## **PREGNANCY and LEAD POISONING**

## Pregnant Women

Pregnant women should be aware of lead poisoning because of the potential harm lead has on the fetus.

### Should pregnant women be concerned about lead poisoning?

Yes. Lead can be passed from the pregnant woman to the fetus.

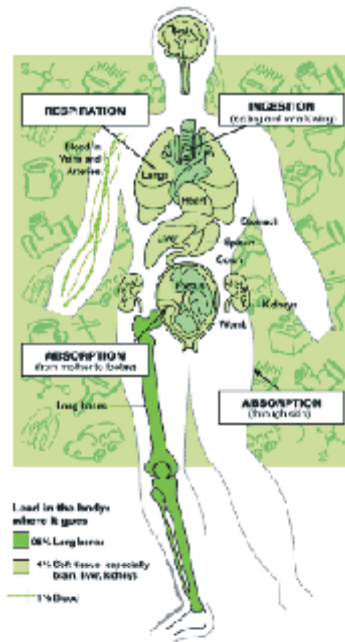
Specifically, pregnant women should not:

- engage in any activity that disturbs lead-based paint in a significant way;
- live in or be present in a house or apartment where work that disturbs lead-based paint is under way; and
- return to a house or apartment where lead-based paint has been disturbed until a thorough clean-up has been completed.

**Pregnant women should never be involved in any activity that disturbs lead-based paint. In addition, their tap water should be tested to ensure that it is safe drinking water.**

### Is there concern of the effects a prior lead exposure may have on the development of my baby?

Yes. Lead also gets into the blood of pregnant women from their own bone stores. During a period of physiological stress, such as in pregnancy or lactation, bone-stores of minerals, including the normally inert lead, can be mobilized back into a woman's blood and increase her blood-lead level. As this blood circulates, it is picked up by the fetus.



## How does lead reach the fetus?

Lead can cross the placental barrier. The body has difficulty distinguishing between calcium and lead. Those with calcium deficiencies may absorb even more lead.

### Would a blood test indicate a release of lead from bone stores?

Yes, evidence suggests that elevated exposure to lead may continue for many years, even after exposure to environmental sources has been reduced. This may occur primarily due to the mobilization of bone lead stores.

### What harm can a lead exposure cause to a fetus?

- Premature birth - Babies born before they are fully developed are at increased risk for illness or death.
- Small size and low birth weight - Exposure to lead may affect an unborn baby's growth in the womb. Babies that are too small at birth face a higher risk of illness and death.
- Miscarriage or stillbirth - Babies exposed to very high levels of lead could die before or at birth.

Learning and behavior problems - Studies show that lead can harm an unborn baby's brain and nervous system. Babies exposed to lead before birth may not be as intelligent as other children the same age and may have learning and behavior problems.

### Can a lead exposure experienced by a male affect reproduction?

Yes. A man exposed to lead may have fewer sperm, sperm that move slower or abnormal sperm.



Lead is a poison. If lead gets into your body, it could harm you and your unborn baby.

Here's how you can **GET AHEAD OF LEAD:**

■ **IF YOU'RE FIXING UP A ROOM FOR THE BABY, DON'T REMOVE PAINT**

Old paint can have lead in it. During removal, you can breathe in lead dust, which can travel through your blood to your unborn baby. Call your local health department for information about professionals who handle lead-based paint problems. While you're pregnant, stay away from places where fixing up or re-decorating is going on. And let someone else do the clean-up after the work is done.



■ **MAKE SURE THERE'S NO LEAD DANGER WHERE YOU WORK.**

People who work at construction, plumbing, painting, car repair and certain other jobs can be exposed to lead. If you're pregnant and work in one of those jobs, ask your employer how you should protect yourself. You and anyone you live with who is exposed to lead on the job should shower and change into fresh clothes and shoes before coming home. Wash work clothes separately.



■ **BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR HOBBIES.**

Some crafts call for use of paints, glazes and solder (used in making stained glass). Many of these contain lead.

All pregnant employees are entitled to a health and safety risk assessment. This will ensure that your working conditions do not put you or your unborn baby in danger

■ **USE LEAD-FREE DISHES.**

Some dishes may have lead in their glazes. Don't use chipped or cracked dishes to store or serve food.

■ **EAT RIGHT TO GET AHEAD OF LEAD.**

Foods high in iron and calcium can help lower your lead risk.

**For iron**, dried beans/peas, leanbeef/pork, chicken/turkey, spinach, whole grain/fortified breads, eggs, tuna and collard greens.

**For calcium**, cheese, milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, ice cream, milkshakes, pudding, cream soups, pizza, lasagna, macaroni and cheese.

■ **USE THESE CLEANING TIPS.**

Damp mop often, to reduce lead dust. But be sure to wash your hands after you mop. If you've been washing windows, floors or walls, or digging in the garden, be sure to wash your hands. Always wash your hands before making meals or eating.



■ **GET GOOD ADVICE.**

Call your doctor or local health department to learn more about lead poisoning prevention. And Lead Test has pamphlets to help you learn more too.

PDF files can be downloaded from our web site: [www.leadtest.co.uk](http://www.leadtest.co.uk) or email: [contact@leadtest.co.uk](mailto:contact@leadtest.co.uk) Or just write to: Lead Test, 17 Wisp Green, Edinburgh, Eh15 3QX. Rights and benefits, Government on rights, benefits to other sites [www.ukonline.gov.uk](http://www.ukonline.gov.uk) [www.dss.gov.uk](http://www.dss.gov.uk) Health & Safety Executive Infoline 08701 545501, [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) Parents at Work Infoline 020 7628 3565 [www.parentsatwork.org.uk](http://www.parentsatwork.org.uk). Remember to check for updates to this booklet.

