

Lead Poisoning and Our Children

The Canton City Health Department is committed to helping the children in our community grow up healthy. We want parents, grandparents and care givers throughout our community to learn about lead poisoning and lead poisoning prevention. Although the United States has made great strides in reducing sources of lead in the environment, lead poisoning of thousands of children one year to six years of age occurs in our country each year.

Lead poisoning among children under six years of age is the number one environmental health risk they face. **Hand to mouth activity of young children is the most common way lead enters the child's body.** Due to research being done and the ability to study the effects of smaller amounts of lead in the body, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has lowered the threshold amount of lead that can cause harm in children ages one year to six years old. Currently, this threshold is 5 ug/dL (micrograms lead per deciliter of whole blood). Note that a microgram is about the size of a grain of sugar.

Once lead is in a child's body, it can do much damage; damage which can last a lifetime. Lead can affect all body systems. Lead can interfere with the child's brain development which can cause learning problems, behavior problems, and delays in development which can make it difficult for a child to learn. Lead can damage the kidneys, and other major organs of the body. Lead has been shown to lower IQ, which can result in children not reaching their potential. In short lead poisoning can rob a child, possibly your child, of a better life.

For more information, contact the Canton City Health Department Nursing Division at (330) 489-3322.

Lead Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/>

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – <http://www2.epa.gov/lead>

Lead-safe Tips for Families – <http://www.cantonhealth.org/eh/?pg=200>

Ohio Department of Health Lead Information –
http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/cfhs/lead_ch/infoparents.aspx

Ohio Department of Health Lead Testing Requirements –
http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/cfhs/lead_ch/leadch1.aspx

Products Containing Lead –
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/~media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/cfhs/lead%20poisoning%20-%20children/13-076%20DFCHS%20OHHLPPP%20-%20Products%20Lead.ashx>

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development –
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/lead