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SP599-TN Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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A blood test takes only a few minutes and can be done at the doctor's office or at a local clinic.

You should have your child tested even though the child appears healthy and doesn't have any signs of illness. There isn't any way to tell if your child has lead poisoning without being tested.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that a child should be first tested by the time the child is a year old. Remember, the younger your child is, the greater the risk for lead poisoning.

Contact:

Your local health department for information on testing children for lead poisoning.

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Call (615) 741-0355 for information on medical screening and case management for children with elevated blood lead levels.

TENNESSEE LEAD LINE/TDEC
Call 1-888-771-5323 for information on assessment, abatement or identification of lead sources.

TENNESSEE CHILDHOOD LEAD
POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM
<http://www.state.tn.us/health/lead/index.htm>

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
(TDEC)
<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/swm/leadpaint/index.html>

Your local UT County Extension office for general lead information.



**Lead Testing at 1 and 2...
It's the Thing to Do**

TENNESSEE CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

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SP599-20M-4/02

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University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
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**TENNESSEE CHILDHOOD
LEAD POISONING
PREVENTION PROGRAM**

Stop Childhood Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning is a disease that can cause serious health problems, such as brain and kidney damage, coma and even death. Even small blood lead levels can lead to learning problems and hyperactivity. You should be concerned if your child tests at even a low level; any level of lead in the blood is a concern.

Signs of lead poisoning may not be present or may be thought of as the flu. However, some symptoms could include:

- Stomach ache and/or cramps
- Low energy
- Headache and irritability
- Poor appetite

Who is at Risk

Children from birth to six years are at a high risk for lead poisoning because they absorb a much higher amount of lead. Their growing bodies are more likely to be damaged by lead. Pregnant women, people living in poverty and/or living in housing built before 1978 are also at high risk.

Sources of Lead

Houses built before 1978 are likely to contain paint with some level of lead. Paint chips and dust from old lead-based paint are common sources of lead. Other sources include water from lead pipes, soil, food or drink stored in lead-glazed pottery or dishes and leaded crystal, imported vinyl mini-blinds, some folk medicines and ethnic cosmetics, auto fumes, shotgun pellets, battery casings, and some hobby materials.

You should also change clothes before coming home if you work around or with lead.

Tips for Prevention

- Avoid storing food in open cans, pottery, ceramics or lead crystal.
- Do not use warm water from the tap for cooking, drinking or making baby formula.
- Let tap water run 1 to 2 minutes before using.
- Children should eat healthy foods high in iron, calcium and vitamin C, and avoid extremely fatty foods.
- Regularly clean floors, window sills and other surfaces **with soap and water.**

- Wash children's hands, bottles and pacifiers often.
- Take shoes off at the door.
- Look for chipping or flaking paint.

Should Your Child Be Tested?

All children less than six years of age should be tested for lead poisoning.

Your child's doctor or the local health department can tell you how often your child should be tested.

