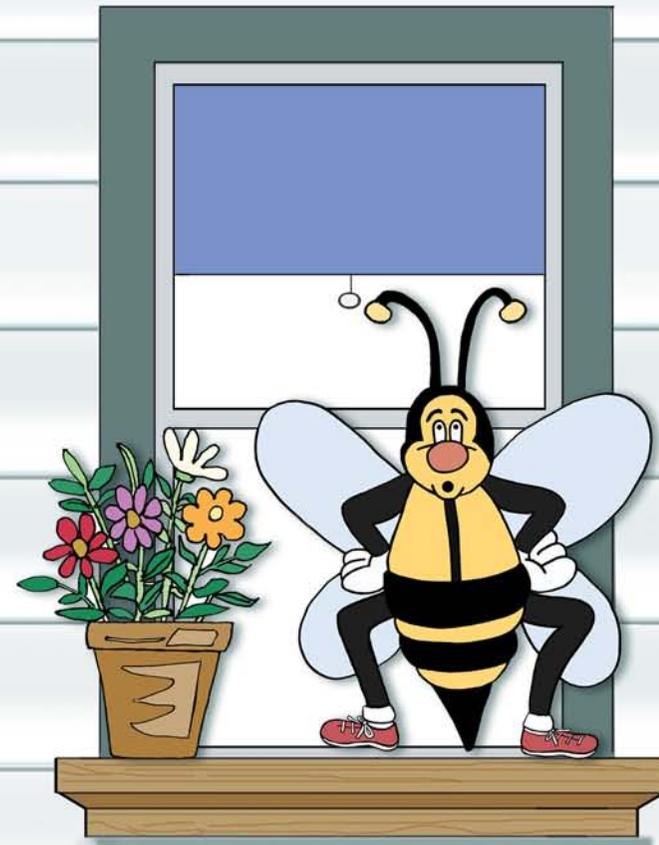


BE LEAD SAFE!

Where do I go to get more information?

- **Mississippi Department of Health**
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
601-576-7447 or 1-866-458-4948
- **Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality**
601-961-5171



***A healthy life
is too important
to risk.***

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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1-866-HLTHY4U

(1-866-458-4948)

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What is lead poisoning?



Lead poisoning is a condition caused by chewing, swallowing or inhaling lead. If you live in a home built before 1960 you may be at increased risk for lead poisoning.

Lead can be found in:

- Paint: house paint used in older homes sometimes contains lead
- Pipes and pumps: water pipes and submersible brass pumps may contain lead
- Antique pewter, jewelry (including toy jewelry and some plastic jewelry components), keys, brass faucets, stained glass
- Fishing weights and lures
- Some imported medicines and cosmetics
- Plastic window blinds (most often in blinds bought before 1997)
- Electrical cords and garden hoses
- Pottery, ceramic ware, ceramic sinks and tubs

How do you get lead poisoning?

Anyone can get lead poisoning, but young children are more at risk because they like to put things in their mouths, and their bodies absorb lead more easily than adults. Pregnant mothers can also pass lead to their unborn children.

Some of the ways people get lead poisoning are:

- Swallowing chipped paint or lead-contaminated dust or soil
- Swallowing or chewing products that contain lead, like metal jewelry, electrical cords, plastic blinds and fishing weights
- Drinking water from pipes with lead or from brass pumps
- Breathing in lead particles created by sanding or scraping old paint or by welding or soldering

What are the signs of lead poisoning?

Some signs of lead poisoning include:

- Nausea, constipation, stomach pain and vomiting
- Mood problems
- Sleep disturbances
- Loss of appetite
- Headaches, fatigue

Lead can build up in the body over time. Even small amounts of lead can cause serious and permanent health problems such as:

- Brain and nervous system damage
- Lower IQ and learning disabilities
- Behavior problems
- Hearing damage

High levels of lead in the body can cause:

- Convulsions
- Coma
- Death



What can I do to protect myself and my family from lead poisoning?

If you suspect that you or your family is at risk for lead poisoning, contact the Mississippi Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. They can give you information about detecting lead hazards in your home, reducing your children's exposure to lead, and information about where to get a blood lead test.



What can I do about lead-based paint?

Surfaces painted with lead-based paints become dangerous as they peel and flake. If lead-based paint has been used in your home, reduce your risk by hiring a professional certified by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality to remove or enclose it. Do not attempt to do this on your own. Lead dust generated by scraping or sanding lead-based paint can be dangerous to your health.

What can I do about lead in water pipes or pumps?

If you think that your plumbing has lead in it, run your faucets for at least two minutes before using your water. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking and making baby formula. Hot water can absorb more lead.

Reduce the risk of lead poisoning:

- Do not burn painted wood in or around your home. It may contain lead.
- Do not store food or liquids in lead crystal or old or imported pottery or ceramic ware.
- If you work with lead, change your clothes and shoes and shower before you come home.
- Watch your children to make sure they do not chew on paint chips, put their mouths on painted surfaces, or place objects that contain lead in their mouths.
- Keep floors and window sills as clean as possible. Clean them twice a week with a mop or sponge soaked with warm water and all-purpose cleaner. If window sills accessible to young children cannot be easily cleaned, cover them with contact paper or plastic.
- Dirt may contain lead and can stick to children's skin and their toys. If your children play outside, encourage them to play in grassy or sandy areas at least ten feet away from old houses and buildings.
- Wash your child's toys and stuffed animals regularly.
- Wash children's hands with soap and water or wipe them with baby wipes, especially before meals and bedtime and after they touch window sills or outside surfaces near old houses. Keep children from touching window sills and wells.
- Feed your children foods rich in iron, calcium and vitamin C, such as iron-fortified cereals, eggs, lean red meat, beans, dairy products, and citrus fruits and juices. These nutrients can lower the amount of lead your child absorbs.
- Do not allow children to eat while sitting on the floor, carpet or steps.

