

PREGNANCY

Pregnancy and Lead Poisoning: How to keep you and your baby healthy and Safe



PREGNANCY

800.414.6580

WHAT IS LEAD?

Lead is a metal found in nature that is used for many things. It can be harmful if you eat items that have lead or breathe in leaded dust.

SOURCES OF LEAD:

- Lead-based paint (chipping or peeling paint and dust from homes or buildings built before 1978).
- Water from older plumbing with lead pipes.
- Foods stored in containers that contain lead.
- Soil that is contaminated with lead by chipping or peeling paint.
- Leaded dust that may be on work clothes or hair and brought home.
- Gun reloading, target practice, ceramics, refinishing furniture, stained glass and fishing weights can all be sources of lead.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF LEAD POISONING?

Lead poisoning can cause:

- Damage to the brain, nervous system, kidneys and the hearing of an unborn child.
- High blood pressure
- Stomach problems
- Nerve disorders
- Miscarriage
- Problems getting pregnant
- Low birth weight
- Memory loss
- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle and joint pain

HOW CAN I PREVENT LEAD POISONING?

To prevent lead poisoning, you should:

- See a doctor for a blood test.
- Have paint, soil or water tested.
- Eat a diet high in Calcium and Iron.
- Wash your hands often.
- Cover chipping or flaking paint.
- Don't remove any paint when remodeling your home.
- Use a wet cloth or mop and warm, soapy water to clean painted surfaces.

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant and think you're being exposed to lead, ask your doctor for a blood test. A blood lead test can tell if you or your unborn child is being exposed to lead.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



FOR MORE INFORMATION about pregnancy, call Care Management at 1.800.414.6580 (TTY: 1.800.473.0989).



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Division of Medicaid & Medical Assistance