LEAD POISONING FACT SHEET

The Scary Statistics

Children ages 1 to 5 diagnosed with elevated blood lead (EBL) levels of 5 µg/dl or higher:
- Reduced motor control and balance
- Developmental disabilities
- Coma
- Convulsions
- Death

Children with Low Levels:
- Learning disabilities
- Decreased intelligence (I.Q.)
- Speech development problems
- Hearing loss
- Hyperactivity
- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Aggressive, violent behavior

Adults with Low Levels:
- Fatigue/irritability
- Impaired concentration
- Nausea/Constipation
- Depression
- Premature birth or low birth weight
- 46% increased rate of early mortality
- 16-19% increased risk of cardiovascular disease

The new CDC lead reference level is 5 µg/dl though any EBL level is reason for concern.

Children with High Levels:
- Reduced motor control and balance
- Developmental disabilities
- Coma
- Convulsions
- Death

Adults with High Levels:
- Hearing loss
- Anemia
- Hypertension
- Miscarriages or stillbirths
- Impotence
- Seizures
- Death

Get Help

Free Services Available to Eligible Families
- Health and safety assessment
- Lead hazard reduction
- Window and door replacement
- Home safety education
- Legal services
- Tenants’ rights assistance
- Housing Choice Voucher program
- Asthma trigger reduction
- Pest management
- Mold remediation

For help or more information, please contact:

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The Costs of Lead Poisoning
- Childhood lead poisoning results in an average loss of lifetime earnings of $723,000 per child²
- Developmental issues due to lead poisoning lead to increased costs for special education and the criminal justice system

Societal Implications of Lead Poisoning:
- A child is estimated to lose two IQ points for each 10 µg/dL increase in blood lead level⁴
- Effects are long term and often irreversible

Juvenile Delinquency:
- Lead exposure is associated with an increased risk for antisocial and delinquent behavior⁵
- Children who are lead poisoned are seven times more likely to drop out of school and six times more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system.⁶
- Lead effects neurotransmitters which affect cognition and influence impulse control

Cost Savings from Lead Poisoned Prevention:
- Each dollar invested in lead paint hazard control results in a return of $17–$221 or a net savings of $181–269 billion³
- Lead poisoning prevention results in cost savings from reductions in crime and delinquency and reductions in special education costs

Federal Health Care & Children at Risk⁷:
- Elevated blood lead levels remain a significant problem for children served by federal health care programs (Medicaid, WIC, Health Centers Program)
- An estimated 400,000 children aged 1-5 in federal health care programs are not being screened for lead
- Lead testing screening rates are adversely affected by lack of oversight, funding and other problems

Required Screening: Medicaid & HCFA Policy:
- All children eligible for Medicaid are required to have a blood lead test at the ages of 12 and 24 months
- All Medicaid children between 36-72 months must receive a blood lead test if they have not received one previously

References
3 Gould E. "Childhood lead poisoning: Conservative estimates of the social and economic benefits of lead hazard control," Environmental Health Perspectives 117: 1162-1167, July 2009