

Childhood Blood Lead Testing:

Getting a Good Specimen

By obtaining a good fingerstick specimen you may avoid a false positive and eliminate the trauma of a followup venous test.

Washing with soap and water is crucial to remove possible lead contaminatin on the skin.

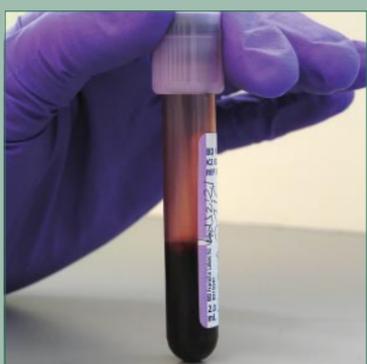
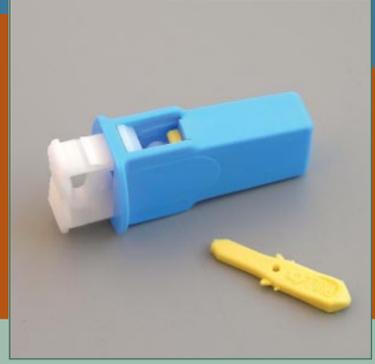
The DSHS lab provides safety lancets and needle holders.

Finger Stick (Capillary) Collection Method ▶

1. Wash your hands and the child's hands with soap and water.
2. Put on gloves.
3. Ensure that the collection site is warm.
4. Obtain a good puncture and position the collection site below the patient's heart.
5. Wipe away the first drop of blood with sterile gauze.
6. Fill the blood collection tube as quickly as possible to avoid clotting in the tube before it is mixed. If possible, tap the collection tube with your finger while collecting the blood specimen. Draw time should be under approximately 2 minutes.
7. Avoid underfilling/overfilling the collection tube. Fill the tube according to manufacturer's stated fill volume. Blood collection tubes contain only enough anticoagulant for the stated fill volume.
8. Mix all EDTA specimens thoroughly immediately after collection.
9. Label the specimen: print legibly, keeping in mind that the tube and form **must** match exactly or the specimen will be rejected.

◀ Venipuncture (Venous) Collection Method

1. Wash hands and rinse well.
2. Put on gloves.
3. Put on the tourniquet.
4. Ask child to make a fist or squeeze a rubber ball.
5. Select a vein site for venipuncture.
6. Clean the site with an alcohol pad and allow to air dry.
7. Insert the needle into the vein at a 45-degree angle.
8. Remove the tourniquet once blood flow begins.
9. Press the collection tube onto the Vacutainer®.
10. Remove the tube from the Vacutainer® once blood flow ceases.
11. Avoid underfilling/overfilling the collection tube. Fill the tube according to manufacturer's stated fill volume. Blood collection tubes contain only enough anticoagulant for the stated fill volume.
12. Mix all EDTA specimens thoroughly, immediately after collection.
13. Place gauze over the puncture site.
14. Remove the needle from the child's arm and apply pressure to the puncture site.
15. Apply a bandage to the puncture site.
16. Label the specimen: print legibly, keeping in mind that the tube and form **must** match exactly or the specimen will be rejected.



Reporting: It's the Law

Report all blood lead test results for persons age 14 or younger to the Texas Child Lead Registry.

- Call: **1 (800) 588-1248**
- Fax: **(512) 458-7699**
- Mail: **(address below)**

The DSHS lab does not recommend using the "Butterfly" collection method because the tubing used to collect the blood specimen does not contain an anticoagulant. Clotting can begin in the tubing before the blood mixes with EDTA in the collection tube. Also, with "Butterfly" systems it may be harder to achieve required fill volumes.