

# HOW LEAD AFFECTS YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

## What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning happens when you swallow or breathe in lead. Once in your body, lead can begin to affect your health. A person with lead poisoning may not look sick, or their symptoms may be confused for other conditions. There is no safe level of lead a child can have. Lead poisoning is 100% preventable.

## How does lead poison your child's body?

It can:

- Slow growth
- Cause learning and behavior problems
- Cause hearing problems and headaches
- Damage the brain and nervous system

## What are some signs of lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning can have no symptoms – even people who look healthy can have lead poisoning.

### *These are the symptoms of lead poisoning:*

- Tired or cranky
- Vomiting
- Irritability
- Diarrhea / constipation
- Nausea
- Anemia
- High blood pressure
- Weight loss
- Convulsions / coma

## How can lead enter my child's body?

- Putting their hands covered with lead dust in their mouths
- Putting objects that are made or contain lead in their mouths. *Examples:* bb gun pellets and fishing weights
- Eating paint chips or soil that has lead
- Breathing in lead dust

## Questions about Lead?

- Ask your doctor for a blood lead test
- Call the Texas Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 1-800-588-1248.
- For more information and materials, visit [dshs.texas.gov/lead](https://dshs.texas.gov/lead)

## Health Effects in Children

micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ )

