

# BEST MEDICAL CARE, PC

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## How lead affects children

**At lower levels,** the effects may not be obvious. But, low levels of lead may:

- damage the nervous system, including the brain
- interfere with growth
- harm hearing
- lower IQ scores
- make learning difficult.

Low-level lead poisoning may also affect a child's behavior, making the child more excitable or less able to concentrate.



**At very high levels,** lead may cause:

- coma
- convulsions
- death.



**Even small amounts can cause severe and lasting harm to children.**

## Signs of lead poisoning are not always obvious.

**If symptoms occur,** they may be mistaken for the flu or other illnesses. They may include:

- stomachache and cramps
- irritability
- fatigue
- frequent vomiting
- constipation
- headache
- sleep disorders
- poor appetite.

These may also indicate other health conditions. Consult your health-care provider if you notice any of these symptoms.



**If more lead builds up,** you may notice:

- clumsiness
- weakness
- loss of recently learned skills.



**It's easier to prevent lead poisoning**

than to treat it. Because the symptoms aren't obvious, it's important to get your child tested and know how to lower your child's risks.

# Sources of lead in your child's environment

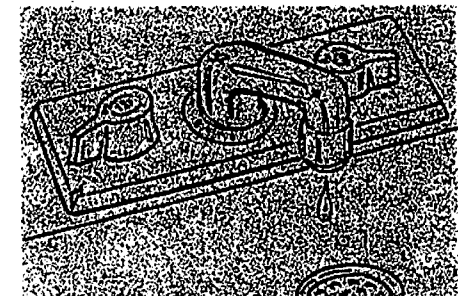
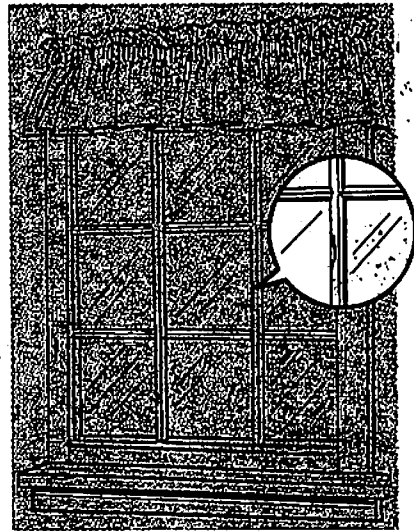
may include:

## Painted surfaces

Lead paint is the major source of lead poisoning in the U.S. Homes built before 1978 are likely to have lead paint -- on the inside or outside. Lead paint can also be found on older toys and furniture.

The biggest threat of lead paint comes from:

- fine lead dust, created when doors, windows or other painted surfaces rub against each other (lead dust may be difficult to see)
- chipped or peeling lead paint.



## Water

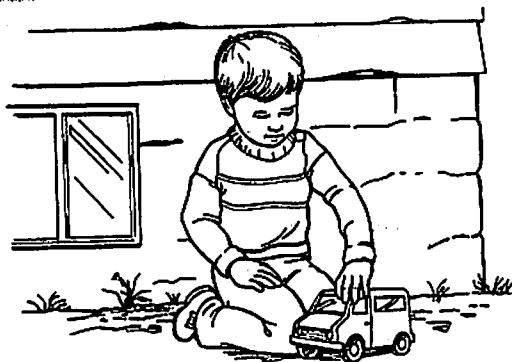
Your cooking and drinking water can be contaminated by:

- lead water pipes
- plumbing fittings made out of brass or bronze
- lead solder used to connect plumbing.

## Soil

The areas where your child plays can be contaminated by:

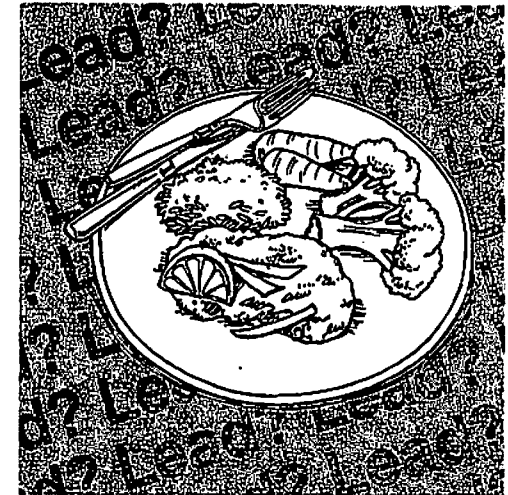
- chips and dust from exterior lead paint
- past use of lead-based insecticides
- lead pollution that has settled in the soil.



## Food

What your child eats can be contaminated if it is:

- grown near sources of lead pollution
- stored or baked in poorly glazed pottery (especially if the food is acidic)
- prepared by someone with lead dust on his or her hands
- packaged in cans with lead seams (no longer used in cans made in the U.S.)
- stored in leaded crystal for prolonged periods.



## Other sources

Your child can also come into contact with lead through:

- dust from renovation, even a few houses away
- antique jewelry
- some porcelain and pottery (especially if imported)
- drapery and window weights
- dust from some plastic blinds made outside the United States
- some homemade or nonmainstream medicines and cosmetics
- dust or fumes from hobbies that use lead, such as making stained glass or target practice
- fishing weights
- battery casings
- lead in the air from nearby lead-processing plants