



Lead and Lead Compounds

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to lead and lead compounds?



- Lead is on the [Proposition 65](#) list because it can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Exposure to lead during pregnancy can affect brain development and cause learning and behavior problems for the child. Exposure to lead can harm the reproductive system of men and women.
- Lead and lead compounds also are on the Proposition 65 list because they can cause cancer. Exposure to lead and lead compounds may increase cancer risk.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about exposures to [listed chemicals](#).

What is lead?

Lead is a metal that is found in nature and used in many industries and products. Over the past 40 years, US laws and regulations have removed or limited the allowable level of lead in certain products, including gasoline, paint, and water pipes and plumbing fixtures.

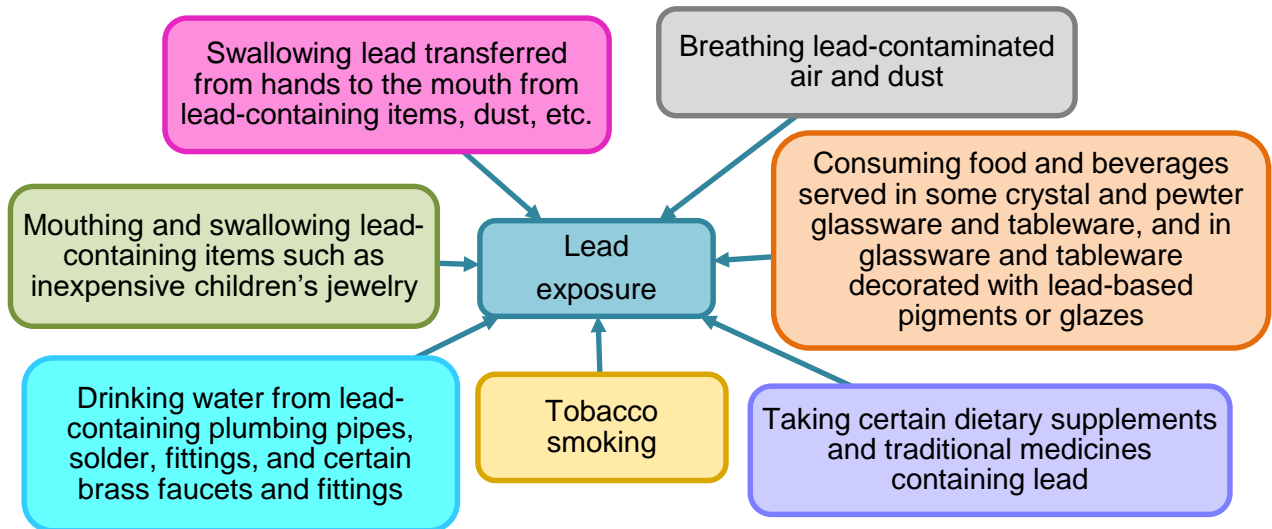
How does exposure to lead and lead compounds occur?

Lead is found in:

- Older interior and exterior house paint, paint chips, and paint dust, which can be present inside homes built before 1978, and in the soil surrounding the exteriors of homes. The US has banned the use of lead in house paint since 1978.
- Many consumer products, including:
 - ▶ Some ceramic dishes and pottery and some pewter and crystal glassware.
 - ▶ Some baby bibs, purses, garden hoses, and other products made of vinyl or imitation leather.
 - ▶ Some toys, white oil paints, costume jewelry, traditional cosmetics (such as kohl, kajal, al-kahal, or surma), and hair dyes.
 - ▶ Some brass faucets and fittings.
 - ▶ Lead-acid batteries used in motorized equipment and vehicles such as cars, trucks, motorcycles, and boats.
 - ▶ Lead fishing sinkers and curtain weights.
- Some candies and spices from Mexico and Asia, some balsamic vinegars, some brightly colored traditional remedies such as Azarcon and Greta, and some dietary supplements.
- Drinking water delivered through lead-containing plumbing pipes, solder, fittings, and certain brass faucets and fittings.

- Tobacco smoke.
- Certain job sites and hobby areas, such as some construction sites and metal-working areas.

Some ways you can be exposed to lead and lead compounds:



- During pregnancy, lead can pass from the mother to the baby.

How can I reduce my exposure to lead and lead compounds?

- ✓ If your home was built before 1978, have your home tested for lead. If hazards are detected, have them fixed.
 - ▶ All renovations in older homes should be done by a contractor certified in lead-safe work practices.
 - ▶ Do not perform home renovations by yourself that generate dust, such as scraping off old paint or tearing down walls.
 - ▶ Cover bare soil near the home with grass, bark, or gravel.
- ✓ If you do any [construction, renovation, painting](#), welding, soldering or other metalworking for your work or as a hobby, use proper protective equipment.
 - ▶ Keep work dust out of your home. Shower after working. Wash work clothes separately.
- ✓ Check with your local water company to find out if lead pipes were used in your community and if [your water needs to be tested for lead](#) originating from pipes and plumbing fixtures.
- ✓ Use water from the cold-water tap for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Water from the hot-water tap can contain much higher levels of lead because hot water is much more likely to leach lead from plumbing pipes and fixtures.

- ✓ Let cold water run for 30 seconds to two minutes before using the water for drinking, cooking, or brushing your teeth to reduce release of lead from some faucets and older pipes. Boiling lead-contaminated water will not reduce the amount of lead in water.
- ✓ Be aware that some spices, traditional cosmetics and medicines may contain lead.
- ✓ When shopping, look for Proposition 65 lead warnings on products and consider alternatives to products that have lead warnings.
- ✓ Avoid exposure to dust and soil, which can contain lead.
 - ▶ Wash your and your child's hands frequently, especially before preparing food and eating.
 - ▶ Wash your children's toys.
 - ▶ Remove shoes or wipe soil off shoes before entering your house.
 - ▶ Clean your floors regularly. When possible, use a wet mop and a vacuum with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter.
 - ▶ Wipe up dust and paint chips with a damp cloth, especially on windowsills and floors.
- ✗ Do not store, cook or serve food in certain kinds of [imported pottery and dishware](#), and do not use dishes with chips or cracks.
- ✗ Never eat non-food items like dirt, broken pottery, or paint chips.
- ✓ Eat a well-balanced diet with adequate calcium, iron and vitamin C, which can help reduce the amount of lead that your body absorbs.

For more information:

General Lead Fact Sheets and Resources

- American Cancer Society (ACS)
 - ▶ Lead
<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/athome/lead>
- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
 - ▶ Toxic Substances Portal-Lead:
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/substances/toxsubstance.asp?toxid=22>
 - ▶ Lead Prevention Tips:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/Lead/tips.htm>
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - ▶ Questions and Answers on Lead-Glazed Traditional Pottery:
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodbornellnessContaminants/Metals/ucm233281.htm>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
 - ▶ Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/CLPPB/Pages/CLPPBhome.aspx>

- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - ▶ Lead:
<https://www.epa.gov/lead>
 - ▶ Lead-Renovation, Repair and Painting Program: Do-It-Yourselfers
<https://www.epa.gov/lead/renovation-repair-and-painting-program-do-it-yourselfers>
- World Health Organization (WHO)
 - ▶ Lead
http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/lead/en/

Lead-Acid Battery Recycling

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)
 - ▶ Lead-Acid Batteries-Hazards and Responsible Use
<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/publications/Documents/HHW/61200002.doc>

Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Proposition 65: Background:
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq>
 - ▶ Proposition 65: The Chemical List:
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>