



GET THE LEAD  
**OUT**

## **I**ntervention


How to lower  
blood lead  
levels in children



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## What can I do to reduce my child's exposure to lead?

### Wash up

- Wash children's hands and faces after they play outside and before they eat or go to sleep.
- Bottle and pacifier nipples should be cleaned each time they fall on the ground or floor.
- Wash infant's and toddler's toys often. Remove toys that are cracked, broken or that have chipped paint. Remove any toy that you suspect may contain lead paint.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating them.
- Wash hands and countertops before preparing food.

## Eat well-balanced meals

- Give your child three healthy meals and two nutritious snacks each day.
- Give your child foods high in iron and calcium. Foods such as lean meat, eggs, greens, milk, potatoes, fortified cereals, and fruit help keep lead out of your child's system.
- Do not store food in open cans, pottery, pewter, or lead crystal.

## Use cold water

- Older homes may have lead in the water pipes that put lead into the water. Newer homes may have lead soldered pipes.
- Run water from the cold water tap for a few minutes before using it for cooking or drinking.
- Do not use water from the hot water tap for cooking, drinking or preparing infant formula.



## Housekeeping hints

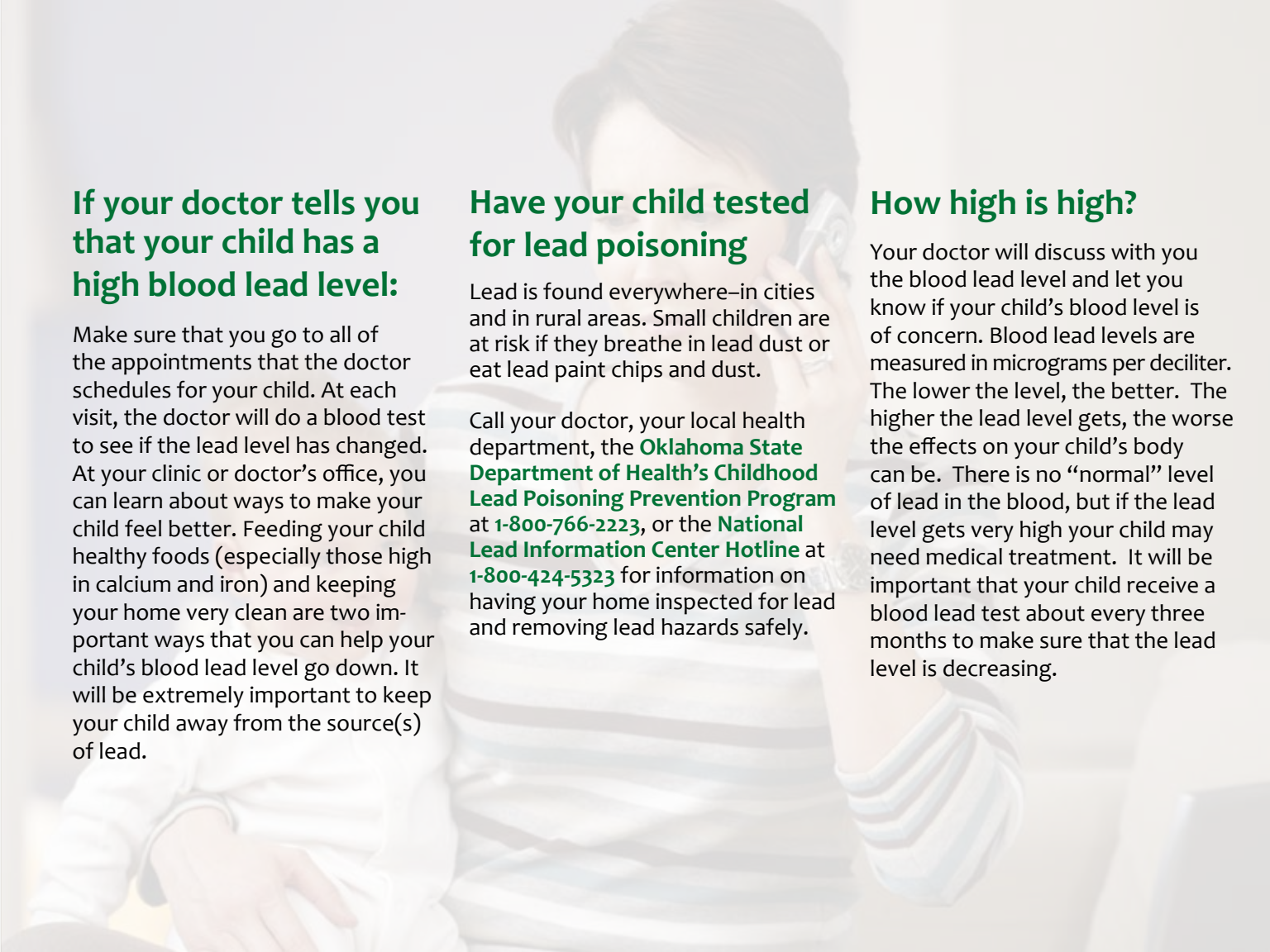
- Use water with a little soap or detergent to clean up loose paint chips around windows, doors or woodwork.
- Cover hard to clean surfaces with contact paper or duct tape.
- Wet dust and wet mop often (at least once a week) to remove lead dust in the house. Use a clean cloth or damp mop with detergent or household cleaner. Wash rags separately from other laundry.
- Do not burn old newspapers, bread bags and comic books or magazines. These are sometimes printed with lead ink.
- Keep work clothes of an adult who works in the lead industry or uses lead in a hobby separate from clothes of other family members. Wash these clothes separately from other household laundry.
- To remove paint chips and dust from around the outside of the house, dampen porches, sidewalks and driveways with water then sweep debris into a plastic bag. Dampen the sides of buildings and scrub with a stiff brush. DO NOT POWER WASH. Collect paint chips in a plastic bag and tie it before disposing of the bag.

- Plant shrubs or grass in bare dirt where your children play.

## Screening for lead

All children aged 6 months to 6 years should be assessed at least once a year to determine their risk of lead poisoning.

For more information, call your doctor, your local health department, the [Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program](#) at 1-800-766-2223, or the [National Lead Information Center Hotline](#) at 1-800-424-5323.

A doctor in a white coat is examining a young child's arm. The child is wearing a striped shirt and is holding a phone to their ear. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

## If your doctor tells you that your child has a high blood lead level:

Make sure that you go to all of the appointments that the doctor schedules for your child. At each visit, the doctor will do a blood test to see if the lead level has changed. At your clinic or doctor's office, you can learn about ways to make your child feel better. Feeding your child healthy foods (especially those high in calcium and iron) and keeping your home very clean are two important ways that you can help your child's blood lead level go down. It will be extremely important to keep your child away from the source(s) of lead.

## Have your child tested for lead poisoning

Lead is found everywhere—in cities and in rural areas. Small children are at risk if they breathe in lead dust or eat lead paint chips and dust.

Call your doctor, your local health department, the **Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program** at **1-800-766-2223**, or the **National Lead Information Center Hotline** at **1-800-424-5323** for information on having your home inspected for lead and removing lead hazards safely.

## How high is high?

Your doctor will discuss with you the blood lead level and let you know if your child's blood level is of concern. Blood lead levels are measured in micrograms per deciliter. The lower the level, the better. The higher the lead level gets, the worse the effects on your child's body can be. There is no "normal" level of lead in the blood, but if the lead level gets very high your child may need medical treatment. It will be important that your child receive a blood lead test about every three months to make sure that the lead level is decreasing.

All children 6 months to 6 years of age should be assessed for lead poisoning at least once every year. Check with your doctor to make an appointment.

For further information, contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 1-800-766-2223 or the National Lead Information Center Hotline at 1-800-424-5323.

This brochure provides information on lead poisoning and describes steps you can take to reduce your child's exposure to lead.



Screening & Special  
Services

Oklahoma State  
Department of Health

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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