

Health Care Provider Newsletter

A Collaboration Between the Alameda County Lead
Poisoning Prevention Program and the City of Berkeley
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

"There is no safe level of lead for children..."
The American Academy of Pediatrics, October 2007

Lead and Pregnancy Update:

Approval is pending on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Lead and Pregnancy Work Group's national guidelines and recommendations for the medical management of lead risks in pregnant and lactating women. In the meantime, New York, Minneapolis, and New Mexico have adopted their own guidelines for lead and pregnancy including a risk assessment that can be used by families and prenatal care providers. Until the national recommendations are released, you are encouraged to evaluate and screen at risk pregnant women for lead poisoning. A pregnant woman with an elevated blood lead level (BLL) can pass lead on to her developing fetus. Children born with elevated BLLs may suffer cognitive and developmental problems as a result of prenatal exposure. A sample prenatal risk questionnaire is available at <http://www.health.state.ny.us/publications/2535.pdf> or you can call the Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and ask for the Health Services Manager at **(510) 567-8267**.

Spring/Summer
2010



It is important for pregnant and lactating women to be tested for lead.

International Clients and Lead Exposure



Though the primary source of lead poisoning for children in the U.S. continues to be through exposure to lead based paint, our local Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program continues to see children whose exposure seems to have little connection to lead in local housing. It is not uncommon to find that herbs and folk medicines have been given for different ailments, or ceremonial cosmetics like

Kohl and Surma have been applied to the child by the parent as a protective measure. Some of our clients are multicultural and come from developing areas of the world where there is less regulation of the components of gasoline and housing, and where the background lead levels are presumably higher than in the U.S. Some of these children visit relatives out of the country at intervals especially during their pre kindergarten years, and seem to have lead levels that increase after return from their out of country travel. For these children, we encourage re-screening and monitoring. Additionally, Public Health Nursing case management is available through both the Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and the City of Berkeley Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. For more information about folk medicines, please visit the site for the Center for Disease Control (CDC), which provides some specific information for your reference: <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/folkmedicine.htm>.

Inside this issue:

Healthy Homes and the New Lead Hazard Policy	2
FAQs about Blood Lead Levels	3
Resources and Links and Product Recall Update	3
Local efforts in Lead Poisoning Prevention	4



New Name: Lead and the Healthy Housing Link

"The connection between health and the dwelling of the population is one of the most important that exists".

Florence Nightingale

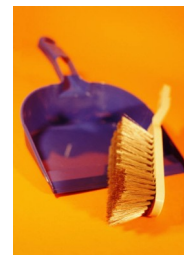
In an effort to integrate lead into the broader healthy homes concept, the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Lead Hazard Control has changed names to the HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control (OHHLHC). Similarly, the CDC's Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch is now known as the Healthy Homes & Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch.

Working from a holistic approach to housing, ensuring a lead safe home is just one component of the healthy housing approach. Others include ensuring a dry, clean, pest free, well ventilated, safe, and well maintained home. The Alameda County Healthy Homes Project, administered by the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, has received another grant from OHHLHC to continue making housing healthier for children, with a special emphasis on asthma, intergenerational households and families with disabled members and older adult caregivers to those children. Services to families of asthmatic children will include in-home educational visits, allergen reduction treatments, and minor home safety repairs. The focus will be on identifying housing health hazards that contribute to asthma, safety issues, and lead poisoning. The Project will also coordinate these efforts with the City of Berkeley Public Health Department. The project will begin accepting referrals this summer for children residing in Alameda County with a diagnosis of asthma or respiratory distress. For more information, please call the Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at **(510) 567-8280** and ask for the Healthy Homes Project Manager.

The Seven Healthy Homes Principles

Be sure to keep your home...

1. **Dry**
2. **Clean**
3. **Pest-Free**
4. **Safe**
5. **Contaminant-Free**
6. **Ventilated**
7. **Maintained**



Creating healthier housing promotes the healthy growth and development of children.

New Lead Hazard Policy: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Renovate, Repair and Painting Rule

Lead-based paint continues to be a traditional source of exposure of children with lead poisoning. Unqualified workers conducting renovation, repairs and painting on pre-1978 properties have the potential of putting children at an even greater risk. Over a million children are affected by lead poisoning, which can lead to behavioral problems and learning disabilities. For pregnant women, lead dust can harm the developing fetus; and for adults, lead paint dust can cause high blood pressure, hypertension and effect kidney function. On April 22, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implemented the Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP), in which any contractors, painters, and property owners performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 must be certified and must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. We encourage families that live in pre-1978 properties to learn more about what they can do to protect their children from lead-exposure due to lead-hazards that are created by unsafe work practices. For more information, please visit the U.S. EPA website at

www.epa.gov/getleadsafe.



The main source for lead exposure for children is traditionally lead-based paint.

FAQs about Screening for Lead

- Q:** Are blood lead levels in the 5-9 range safe?
- A:** No. A multitude of scientific evidence suggests there is no safe level of lead.
- Q:** What are the current guidelines for levels in the 5-9 range?
- A:** Retest in 6 months to ensure no increase in lead level.
- Q:** Are there services available to a family with Blood Lead Levels (BLLs) < 10?
- A:** Yes. A range of services, depending on blood lead level, is provided by the Alameda and Berkeley Lead Programs (including educational mailers, home visits, visual assessments, home investigations, nursing case management). At the 5-9 level, services currently include an educational mailing, and technical assistance via telephone consult or website. Please refer to the insert for a listing of services for all blood lead levels.
- Q:** Will the CDC lower the current level of concern from 10 to 5 mcg/dL?
- A:** At present, the CDC recognizes that adverse effects are seen at BLLs below 10, but has not moved to officially change the current level of concern. In the meantime, they recommend frequent retesting of children with blood lead levels in the 5-9 range.



Alameda County and City of Berkeley Lead Programs offer health education for children within the 5-9 µg/dL range

Physicians Recognized for Efforts in Lead Poisoning Prevention

The following providers were honored during National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 18-24, 2009 for their distinguished work ensuring that children are screened for lead:

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors issued proclamations to:

- ♦ Steven Chu Chen, MD (Asian Health Services)
- ♦ Nicki Brito, NP (Tiburcio Vazquez Health Center)
- ♦ Sylvia Delius, MD (Kaiser-Oakland)



Your dedication truly benefits children exposed to lead in their environments.

Congratulations

From The Alameda County and City of Berkeley Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs!

Berkeley-Albany YMCA Head Start "Lead-Free Me!" Birthday Club



The City of Berkeley Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (COB CLPPP) is collaborating with Head Start/Early Head Start on a project called the "Lead-Free Me" Birthday Club. The focus of this project is to educate parents and guardians on the importance of screening and to encourage them to have their children tested for lead. Members of the birthday club are sent a birthday card near their child's birthday with a reminder to have their child screened for lead. The parents then request that the doctor send a copy of the lab results to their home; in which they bring to Head Start/Early Head Start to receive a birthday club gift bag. The bag includes a certificate of congratulations, a book (*Monsters get scared of the doctor, too*), a picture frame and a \$10 gift card for Grocery Outlet. "Lead-Free Me" started in May of this year and is adapted from a similar project that was done by the Contra Costa County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and the Contra Costa Head Starts. The Lead Program is very excited about this collaboration with Head Start/Early Head Start and commend them for the commitment to helping children stay lead-free! For more information, contact the COB CLPPP at [510-981-5289](tel:510-981-5289).



Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

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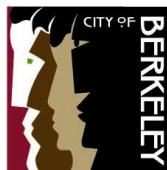


Alameda County Community Development Agency

Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

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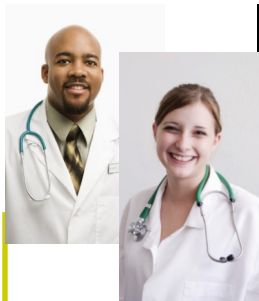
Department of Health Services
Public Health Division



The Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and City of Berkeley Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention provide services to Alameda County and Berkeley residents as they relate to reducing lead exposure in children. Services range from nursing case management for children with blood lead levels above 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ to health education for children with levels between 5-9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$.

For more information about our case management services, please see our insert.

We also provide resources to property owners on lead-safe practices, such as free lead-safe painting and remodeling classes, In-Home Consultation and garden soil testing kits, access to HEPA-Vacuums and more! For more information about our programs, or to refer a client to our services, please feel free to contact us at the information listed above.



Resources and Links

- Free CME unit for Online Self Study Module on Lead Poisoning http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/cme/distance_education/webevents/07_PEDS_10-12-07_Rosenberg_page.html
- Free Online Continuing Education Course for Health Professionals through the UCSF Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit: http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/emes/health_professionals/pediatrics.html

Product Recall Update

- Mercury poisoning has been linked to homemade face creams from Mexico and the Dominican Republic. See recent California Department of Public Health alert for more information. http://www.chib.org/papers/CDPH_Mecury_Health_Alert_Skin_Cream.pdf
- Lead has been found in a variety of children's foods and juices. Legal notices are pending. For more information: <http://www.envirolaw.org/documents/FINALNewsRelease.pdf>. For a complete list of the products: <http://www.envirolaw.org/documents/ProductsTestedforLeadFINAL.pdf>

Visit the following websites for information on recalled products.

- www.recalls.gov or www.cpsc.gov
- Check independently tested toys at www.healthytoys.org
- Check lists of lead-safe candies at www.leadinmexicancandy.com



Ask your clients to stay connected to consumer product updates, such as those from Consumer Product Safety Commission.