



California Poison Control Offers 10 Tips for Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2015

Suggested tweet: Get the lead out. Soil and dust spread lead. Wet mop floors, wet wipe windowsills, vacuum surfaces.

San Francisco, CA – October 25, 2015 – It's Lead Poisoning Prevention Week October 25 – 31, 2015. From China and Antarctica to Ohio and California, no nation or state is free of lead poisoning. It affects humans and wildlife, children and adults, with children being the most susceptible to lead poisoning. **California Poison Control System** warns parents that lead can be found in a variety of products that can harm children.

"Lead poisoning is one of the most important and most preventable pediatric environmental diseases today. Lead poisoning may cause a variety of medical problems, including learning disabilities, anemia, growth problems and behavioral issues," said Cyrus Rangan, MD, a pediatrician and medical toxicologist with California Poison Control. He added that children are most commonly exposed to lead by ingesting paint chips or paint dust and by eating dirt that is contaminated with lead. Dr. Rangan notes that there are numerous other sources of lead in our environment, including contaminated food and beverages; herbal and dietary supplements; some dishware and glazed pottery; and "take-home" lead brought home by parents who work in high-lead exposure jobs.

"Children may be exposed to lead paint in more than one way. We usually think about children eating paint chips that are peeling off the wall. But older buildings with lead paint can also contribute to the build-up of lead in urban garden dirt," Dr. Rangan said. "Washing vegetables from your garden may help reduce exposure surface lead." Dr. Rangan said that teaching children not to eat veggies, or pick a tomato from the garden without washing it first is important.

Dr. Rangan suggests that some ways to prevent lead poisoning in children include good supervision, watching what they put into their mouths, having them wash their hands frequently and providing a diet with appropriate amounts of iron and calcium. Children who are undernourished may absorb more lead into their bodies than children with well-balanced diets.

Dr. Rangan offers the following 10 lead poisoning prevention tips:

1. Make sure your children do not put their mouths on painted surfaces, such as toys or window sills.
2. Report chipped or cracked paint to your property owner, especially if you live in a home built before 1978.
3. Cover paint that is peeling or chipping with duct tape until it can be repaired or removed.

4. Ask your doctor about screening your young children for lead. Children may have lead poisoning even when they appear healthy.
5. Necklaces, bracelets, watches, as well as religious jewelry from other countries, may contain lead.
6. Keys may have small amounts of lead in them – do not let babies play with or teethe on keys.
7. Local water supplies are tested regularly for contaminants, including lead. Occasionally older pipes in your home may gradually leech lead into your tap water. If you are concerned about your tap water, run the faucet for a few minutes before using cold water for cooking, drinking or preparing infant formula (this can help flush out the lead which can build up in sitting water), especially if the cold water hasn't been used in the past two hours.
8. Avoid eating foods that are canned outside the United States.
9. Be aware that lead has been found in some candy and its packaging imported from Mexico and neighboring countries. Spices from these countries, especially chili or tamarind, may contain high amounts of lead.
10. Folk medicines (especially home remedies) imported from another country may also contain lead. These include: pay-loo-ah (fever and rash treatment); Azarcon (also called Maria Luisa, Liga, Alarzon, Greta, Coral and Rueda); Asian folk remedies and cosmetics, including Ghasard, Bali Goli, and Kandu; and Middle Eastern cosmetics and folk remedies, including kohl, farouk and bint al zahab.

Call California Poison Control System at 1-800-222-1222 for more information on lead poisoning. Trained certified pharmacists, nurses and poison information providers to help 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service is free, confidential and interpreters are always available. Follow CPCS on [Facebook](#) and on Twitter @poisoninfo. For more free poison and safety tips, text the word TIPS or PUNTOS for Spanish to 69866.

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