



Sources of Lead Exposure

! Lead-based paint and varnish are the primary sources of lead poisoning in children in Wisconsin and nationwide. Other commonly identified sources are listed below.

Source

Details

Prevention information



Lead-based paint and varnish

Lead is found in peeling, flaking, chalking, cracking paint. Lead can also be found in dust from wear and tear, friction, impact, or renovation activities. This dust can stick to fingers, toys, or surfaces.

- Test for lead-based paint on surfaces that rub together (friction surfaces) or surfaces that children can chew, including:
 - ✓ Windows and window sills
 - ✓ Doors and door frames
 - ✓ Stairs and banisters
 - ✓ Porches and railings
 - ✓ Fences
 - ✓ Furniture
- Wet wipe surfaces to remove dust.



Water

Drinking water can be contaminated by lead and galvanized steel service lines and pipes. If they were made before 2014, brass and bronze faucets or screens on faucets may also contain lead.

- Check your plumbing for lead.
- Run water for at least three minutes before drinking if it has been sitting for more than two hours.
- Clean your faucet's screen monthly.
- Use cold water for drinking and making food or baby formula.
- Use bottled water for baby formula if you have lead pipes.



Soil





Contaminated soil (most common in urban areas or near homes built before 1978) can be found in play areas, or be brought inside on shoes, clothing, or pets. Frequent hand-to-mouth contact or eating soiled items can cause ingestion.

- Take off your shoes when entering the house.
- Prevent children from playing in bare soil.
- Plant grass over soil or cover with mulch if possible.
- Do not grow food in lead-contaminated soil.





Prevention Resources

	Source	Details	Prevention information
	Industrial and occupational	Adults who work in places with lead can bring it home on their hair, clothes, shoes, or objects like toolboxes and lunch boxes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow safety rules at work.• Shower and change clothes before leaving work.• Keep work-worn clothes sealed in a heavy plastic bag before washing and wash separately from other household laundry.• Don't bring work items like toolboxes into your home.
	Hobbies	Hobbies that involve casting or soldering, using glaze or pigments, repairing or renovating older buildings, shooting firearms, or drinking home-distilled liquids could expose you to lead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check the ingredients of items you use in your hobbies for lead.• Practice good hygiene and containment of lead dust.• Change clothing after engaging in hobbies.
	Food, cosmetics, home medicine remedies, supplements	Lead has been found in imported spices, candies, kohl, kajal, surma, sindoor, and some Ayurvedic medicines, herbal remedies, and dietary supplements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test imported foods, candies, spices, cosmetics, traditional medicines, or ceremonial powders for lead.• Avoid using products that may contain lead.
	Toys, children's products	Toys and children's jewelry can contain lead. Children (especially under 6) tend to put these items in their mouths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for recalled items on SaferProducts.gov.• Do not let children play with toys manufactured before 1978 or recalled toys.• Do not let children use vintage or antique items.

