

## EATING RIGHT: PREVENTING CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING

Eating healthy can help prevent your child from becoming lead poisoned.

### How does a child get lead poisoning?

Children under six years old can easily be poisoned by dust or chips from lead paint. If your house was built before 1978, it may contain lead paint. The older the house, the more lead paint there is likely to be. An older house may also have lead in its water pipes.

When playing near windows or other places with worn lead paint, children can get lead dust on their fingers and toys and then into their mouths. When swallowed, lead from the dust gets into their blood.

### What happens if your child gets too much lead?

- Your child may not learn well.
- Your child may not grow as well as he or she should.
- Your child may be restless or have trouble sitting still.

### Healthy foods can help keep lead out of your child's blood.

- Children who eat foods that are high in iron and calcium are more likely to be protected from the harmful effects of lead exposure.
- Offer iron rich foods such as lean meat, fish, chicken, dried beans or peas at least 2 times each day.



- Offer WIC cereals. They are high in iron.
- Offer calcium-rich foods such as milk, cheese or yogurt 4 times each day.
- Offer fruits and vegetables at snack and meal times.
- Give your child water to drink. Run the water until it is very cold before using it for drinking, cooking, making formula and washing food.

## Other things you can do:

- Wash your child's hands and face before eating and napping.
- Do not allow your child to eat things that fall on the floor or ground.
- Wash toys at least once per day. Wash pacifiers before giving to your child.
- Find play areas for your child away from loose or chipping paint.
- Do not let your child eat loose paint chips or chew on window sills or other surfaces that are painted.
- Take your child for a blood lead test.

**I want my child to be healthy. Here is one change I will make in what I offer my child to eat:**



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**I will have my child tested for lead poisoning.**

For more information call your health department or the Wisconsin Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (608) 266-5817.

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