



Lead Health Information

Health Effects of Lead

Lead is a naturally occurring mineral. Lead and lead compounds can be found in many places. These places include soil, air, ceramics, pipes, plumbing materials, solder, paint, gasoline, batteries, and cosmetics.

If too much lead is found within the body from sources such as drinking water, it can lead to serious health problems. High levels of lead within the body can cause damage to the brain and the kidneys and affect the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of the body. Groups that are most impacted by high levels of lead exposure are infants, young children, and pregnant women. To learn more about preventing lead exposure in children, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>.

There is no safe level of lead exposure for children under 6 years of age. Lead poisoning can lead to brain and nervous system damage, slowed growth and development, behavioral, learning and emotional problems, and hearing and language issues. Lead can be found in many places within a children's environment such as old paint, soil, and old toys.

General symptoms of lead poisoning vary based on the person. Some symptoms may include abdominal or joint pains, slow growth and cognitive development, fatigue and loss of appetite, hyperactivity, and irritability. For adults, individuals over 65 years of age, buildup of lead in the body can cause cognitive impairment, hypertension, and kidney health issues. Lead exposure can be harmful to pregnant women and their unborn children. During the pregnancy, the child is exposed to lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. Prenatal lead exposure has known harmful effects on the mother and child's health across a wide range of the mother's blood lead levels. Some of these effects include gestational hypertension, spontaneous abortion, low birth weight, and impaired neurodevelopment. Find out more about lead exposure during pregnancy, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>.

3 TIPS FOR EVERYONE

DAILY PIPE FLUSHING
If you have not used your water for a few hours, turn on the cold water faucet at the sink that you drink from, and let the water run for three to five minutes.

ALWAYS USE COLD WATER
Always use cold tap water for drinking and cooking. Lead and zinc are more soluble in hot water than in cold water.

WHY FLUSH?
It's good to avoid drinking water that has been sitting in your home's pipes.

CHECK YOUR AERATORS
Clean aerators (also called screens) yearly to remove debris from any taps used for drinking water.



For more information on lowering your possible exposure to lead, please visit the additional resources linked below.

[Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water](https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water)

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

[Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention – Populations at Higher Risk](https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/populations.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fnceh%2Flead%2Ftips.htm)

https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/populations.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fnceh%2Flead%2Ftips.htm

Educational Videos

Please see the following videos below to learn about lead in drinking water.

[AWWA: Together, Let's Get the Lead Out - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqFHrae92OM)

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QUESTIONS?



CALL: 770-270-6243

VISIT: www.dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program



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