

# What Child Care Providers Need to Know About Lead

New York State has regulations for child care providers to help protect children from lead. Lead is a poison that is especially dangerous for young children. Lead poisoning can cause long-term problems with a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. A blood lead test is the only way to know if a child has lead poisoning. The regulations are designed to promote lead testing and education.

## Who is affected by these regulations?

All child care providers licensed and registered by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, as well as nursery and preschool providers.

## What must child care providers do?

Before or within three months of enrolling a child who is between the ages of one and six years old, providers must try to obtain proof from the parent or guardian that the child has been tested for lead.

## What proof of lead testing is needed?

Proof can be anything signed by the medical provider stating the date of the test. This could be the Office of Children and Family Services "Medical Statement of Child in Childcare" form (OCFS-LDSS-4433), or an immunization record with a lead test date.

## What if parents cannot provide proof of testing?

Children may attend childcare without proof of a lead test. If the parent cannot provide proof of testing, NYS regulations require you to refer the parent to a medical provider or the local health department for a blood lead test, and to give the parent information on lead poisoning and prevention. Prevention information and an order form for free educational materials can be found on the Department of Health website (see below). Document any referrals and information provided in the child's record.

## When should children be tested for lead?

New York State regulations require medical providers to test children for lead at age one year and again at age two years. They must also assess children for lead risk at each well-child visit, and test children up to age six years if a risk for lead poisoning is found. Please tell parents about these requirements and the importance of lead testing.

## Where can you get more information on lead poisoning prevention?

Call your local health department, listed in the phone book blue pages.

In New York City and Rochester, call **311**.

Visit the Department of Health web site at: [www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead](http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead).

The image shows the "Medical Statement of Child in Childcare" form (OCFS-LDSS-4433) from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The form is designed to be completed by licensed physicians, physician assistants, or nurse practitioners. It includes fields for the child's name, date of birth, and the provider's name and address. The form contains several tables for recording immunization dates for various vaccines, including Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Hib, Hepatitis B, and Hib (Type 2). There are also sections for recording other immunizations like Rotavirus and Hepatitis A, and a section for recording lead testing results at different ages (1 year, 2 years, and 6 years). The form includes checkboxes for "Yes" and "No" for various items and a section for the provider's signature and date.

See other side to learn how to protect the children in your care from lead.

Over →

# Protecting Children in Your Child Care from Lead

Most childhood lead poisoning occurs when children swallow or breathe in dust from old lead paint. Most buildings built before 1978 have lead-based paint. Children who live, or spend a lot of time, in buildings built before 1978 are at the highest risk for lead poisoning. If your child care facility was built before 1978, consider having it tested for lead hazards by an EPA-certified firm. Contact your local health department for a list of EPA-certified firms. The following steps can also help protect your children:

Fix peeling lead paint and make building repairs safely.



- Keep children away from peeling paint and paint chips.
- Regulations for child care providers state that peeling or damaged paint or plaster must be repaired promptly. Before making repairs on a building built before 1978, call your local health department to learn how to keep dust levels down during the repair.
- Children and pregnant women should stay away from repairs that disturb old paint, such as sanding or scraping. They should stay away until the area is cleaned using wet cleaning methods and a HEPA vacuum (not dry sweeping).

Wash dust off hands, toys, bottles, windows and floors.



- Wash children's hands and face after play, before meals, and before bed.
- Wash toys, stuffed animals, pacifiers and bottles with soap and water often.
- Mop floors often, and use damp paper towels to clean window wells and sills.

Be careful about contact with lead from toys, jewelry, old furniture, and outside play areas.



- Lead is in some children's jewelry and toys. Sign-up for children's product recall alerts on the internet at [www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx). Any recalled toys must be removed from use.
- Cover bare soil with grass or woodchips. Don't let children play in bare soil.
- Lead paint and varnish can be on old painted toys, high chairs, and furniture. Regulations for child care providers ban the use of toxic paints or finishes on anything that children use or is within their reach.
- Don't let children chew on metal, brass, lead or pewter objects such as keys or figurines, fishing weights, miniblinds, old furniture, or windowsills.

Keep lead out of your food and tap water.



- Let tap water run for one minute before using it, if it hasn't been run for a few hours. Both town and well water could have lead from old plumbing.
- Only use cold tap water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does *not* get rid of lead.
- Use lead-free dishes. Don't cook, serve, or store food in cracked china, or in pewter, crystal, or pottery from Central America or the Middle East.
- Lead is in some imported spices, candy, cosmetics, and traditional medicines.

Serve foods that have calcium, iron, and vitamin C.



- These foods help keep lead from being stored in a child's body.
- Foods with **calcium**: milk, cheese, yogurt, tofu, and green, leafy vegetables.
  - Foods with **iron**: beans, lean meat, fortified cereal and peanut butter.
  - Foods with **vitamin C**: oranges, orange juice, grapefruit, tomatoes, green peppers.
  - The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) helps child care providers pay for nutritious meals. Call 1-800-942-3858 or (518) 402-7400.

Teach your children and parents about lead poisoning prevention.

[www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead](http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead)



State of New York  
Department of Health