

## Who should be tested for lead?

### Children

Children exposed to even small amounts of lead can suffer adverse health effects, most notably a lowered IQ, and may develop learning and behavior problems.

- Both Federal and State Medicaid regulations require that **all** children enrolled in Medicaid be tested at 12 months and **again** at 24 months of age. Children between the ages of 36 months and 72 months of age must receive a screening blood lead test if they have not been previously screened for lead poisoning. For more information, go to [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidEarlyPeriodicScrn/02\\_Benefits.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidEarlyPeriodicScrn/02_Benefits.asp)
- For children under age 6 who not enrolled in Medicaid, the Centers for Disease Control and the New Mexico Department of Health recommend that the health care provider consider ordering a blood lead level test in the following situations:
  - The child's parent or guardian request the test,
  - An exposure to lead is suspected based on the child's history (See the [Lead Risk Questionnaire](#))
  - As part of the differential diagnosis of developmental delay,
  - A sibling, other relative or close associate of the child has an elevated blood lead level,
  - Physical symptoms in the child suggest lead poisoning,
- Any child older than 6 years who have any medical or environmental conditions suggesting lead exposure, or has suffered a gun shot wound, should have a blood test for lead.

See the American Academy of Pediatrics statement on [Lead Exposure and Children](#).

### Pregnant women

Women who are pregnant or plan to become pregnant should be questioned about their history of exposure to lead d exposure can come from:

- A known elevated blood lead level in childhood,
- Pica behavior
- Her current home,
- Her current [job/hobby](#) or a partner's job/hobby,
- Use of certain herbal or folk remedies,
- Use of lead glazed pottery,
- Past exposure to lead in previous jobs,
- Grew up in an older home with lead-based paint,
- Grew up in a household where an adult worked with leaded products.

See the [Lead and Pregnancy](#) fact sheet for the recommended testing schedule.

### Other adults

The following adults should have a blood lead level test:

- [Adults](#) whose [employment](#) exposes them to lead should be tested according to OSHA requirements,
- Adults who are [self-employed or work in small businesses](#) may not be subject to OSHA requirements and would not routinely be tested for occupational lead exposure. The health care provider should consider a blood lead level test to monitor for lead exposure in these individuals as well as for adults who routinely use leaded products in their [hobby](#),
- Any adult with the symptoms of lead poisoning (pain, numbness or tingling of the extremities, muscle weakness, headache, abdominal pain, memory loss, reproductive impairment) should also be tested. In New Mexico, adults have been lead poisoned from non-occupational/hobby sources, such as herbal and folk remedies found to contain lead, and from pica behavior.
- Any adult who suffered a gun shot wound or has retained shrapnel or bullet fragments