

### What is lead poisoning?

- ◆ Lead is a poisonous metal that is harmful to the body.
- ◆ Lead poisoning is most dangerous to young children and unborn babies. Small amounts of lead can seriously affect their health.
- ◆ Lead can harm a child's brain and cause learning, hearing and behavioral problems. It can also harm the kidneys and other organs.
- ◆ Lead in the body stops good minerals such as iron and calcium from working properly which can affect growth and development.
- ◆ These effects can be permanent.

### Have children tested for lead

- ◆ The only way to know if a child has lead poisoning is by getting a blood test.
- ◆ Children should be tested at 12 months and again at 24 months of age.
- ◆ Ask your doctor or health care provider to do a blood test.

**Children with lead poisoning often do not look or act sick.**

### What parents can do

- ◆ A healthy diet can protect children from lead poisoning.
- ◆ Give children four to six small low-fat meals during the day.
- ◆ When children eat the right foods, their bodies absorb less lead.

**Children with empty stomachs absorb more lead than children with full stomachs.**

### Nutrition Resources

#### Woman Infants & Children (WIC)

[nmwic.org](http://nmwic.org)

#### EPA

[www.epa.gov/lead/fight-lead-poisoning-healthy-diet](http://www.epa.gov/lead/fight-lead-poisoning-healthy-diet)



**Lead poisoning robs children of the chance to attain their full potential.**

#### Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

New Mexico Department of Health

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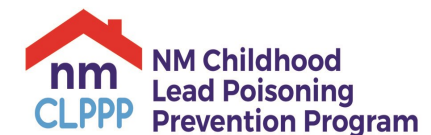
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## Nutrition and Lead Poisoning Prevention In Young Children



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT FOODS

Foods rich in Iron, Calcium and Vitamin C can help protect children from lead poisoning.

### IRON

Iron helps protect the body from lead. Your body uses iron to make red blood cells. Iron is also needed to process blood sugar and to maintain a healthy immune system.

#### Meat and Seafood

Chicken, Pork, Beef, Lamb, Mutton, Wild Game (elk, deer, buffalo, antelope, turkey, rabbit), Liver, Hearts and Kidneys, Clams and Shrimp, Oysters, Scallops, and Sardines



#### Beans [canned, fresh, or dried]

Pintos, Black, Navy, Kidney, Lima, Garbanzo, Lentils, and Soy

#### Vegetables

Dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, mustard, collard, and dandelion greens

#### Other

Eggs, Molasses, Peanut Butter, Almonds, Pecans, Pine Nuts, Whole Grains or Enriched White Flour, and Breads – check label; Iron Fortified Cereals (check label)

#### Fruits

Raisins, Dried Peaches, Dried Apricots, Prunes, Prune Juices, and Cooked Prunes



## CALCIUM

Calcium builds and maintains healthy bones and teeth and helps reduce lead absorption.

#### Milk and Milk Substitutes

Milk, Buttermilk, Evaporated and Dried Milk, Yogurt, Frozen Yogurt, Yogurt Drinks, Ice Milk, Ice Cream, Cheese, Cottage Cheese and Cheese Spreads, and products made with milk substitutes

#### Foods made with milk or milk substitutes

Cream soups and sauces, Flan, Custard, Pudding, Pancakes

#### Seafood

Oysters, Sardines, and Canned Salmon

#### Other

Corn tortillas, Bulgur, Eggs, Broccoli, Collard Greens, Spinach, Kale, Almond, Pecans, Pine Nuts, and Calcium fortified orange juice



## VITAMIN C

Vitamin C builds healthy blood vessels, teeth, bones, and cartilage. Foods containing vitamin C should be served with Iron-rich foods to help the body absorb iron.

#### Vegetables

Broccoli, Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts, Corn, Green Peas, Tomatoes, Tomato Juice, Tomatillos, Cauliflower, Raw Chile, Salsa, Sweet Green and Red Peppers, Onions, Summer Squash, Pumpkin, Yams, Sweet and White Potatoes, Avocado, Dark green leafy vegetables such as kale, collard greens, turnip greens, and mustard greens

#### Fruits and Fruit Juices

Oranges and Orange Juice, Grapefruits and Grapefruit Juice, Melons, Berries, Kiwi, Guava, Mango, Papaya, Persimmon, Cantaloupe, Lychee, Baobab, and Jujube

## Cooking Tips

- ◆ Eat vegetables raw whenever possible.
- ◆ Overcooking vegetables can reduce the amount of Vitamin C.
- ◆ Cook with olive oil and vegetable oils. Limit using butter and lard.
- ◆ Bake, broil, steam, grill or boil food instead of frying.
- ◆ Limit fatty foods. Fat can make a child's body absorb lead faster.\*  
Fatty foods include fried foods, potato chips, chorizo, fry bread, quesadillas, sopapillas, donuts, corn chips, french fries, hot dogs, and bacon
- ◆ Cut fat off of all meat before cooking.
- ◆ Limit eating at fast food restaurants.



*Wash hands before preparing and eating food.*

- ◆ Give whole milk or soy milk with fat to children under two years of age. Choose low fat products for children older than two.
- ◆ Do not store, serve, or cook food in traditional pottery. They may contain lead.
- ◆ Avoid imported foods stored in lead-solder cans.
- ◆ Avoid Mexican candies containing tamarind or chili power.

\*Do not eliminate all fats. Children under the age of 2 need fat in their diet for growth and brain development.

## Healthy Snack Options

Bagels, cereal with low-fat milk, yogurt, fruits, nuts, vegetables, graham crackers, low-fat tortillas, and whole wheat crackers with cheese are good low fat snacks.