

## Fact Sheets for Families

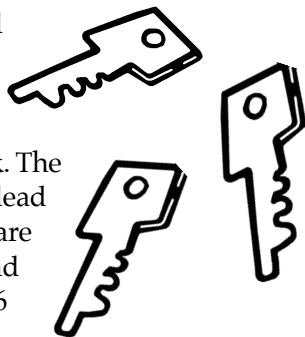
# Lead in Keys

Keeping children safe from lead poisoning requires attention from everyone in a child's life. Lead is harmful to children because if they get enough of it in their bodies, it can limit their ability to learn and their physical development. It is found in a variety of locations and products, such as old house paint, contaminated soil, ceramic bowls and plates, and hobby supplies. The biggest source of lead exposure for children is from old chipping house paint.

### A new study has found that there is also lead in some house and car keys

Many parents give keys to their children to occupy them while the parents are busy shopping or doing chores. Children then put the keys, or their hands, in their mouths, and the lead can get in their bodies. Because children often put their hands in their mouths, they can be exposed to lead many times.

Children who have been lead poisoned do not always look or act sick. The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to have your health care provider do a blood test. Parents and caregivers of children 6 months to 6 years of age should request information about lead poisoning at health care visits and a blood test if appropriate. All children in publicly supported programs like WIC, Medi-Cal and Healthy Families should have a blood test at 12 and 24 months of age. Other children who live or spend time in housing built before 1978 that has chipping paint or has been recently remodeled should also be tested. Call your health care provider or the lead poisoning prevention program of your local Health Department to find out about assessment and testing.



### Recommendations to prevent lead poisoning:

- Because exposure happens when children put their hands in or near their mouths, not through the skin, encourage children to wash their hands frequently, especially before eating and napping.
- Keep your home as clean and free from dust as possible. Regular mopping with detergent will clean up dust and soil that may have lead in it.
- Test painted surfaces for lead before remodeling. Never burn or scrape paint unless you are sure it does not contain lead.
- Cover over or repair areas of wall that have chipping paint.
- Change out of work clothes and shower before coming home if you work in jobs that expose you to lead, such as radiator or battery repair, using solder, or doing home remodeling.
- Do not use older imported or handmade dishes unless you know they do not contain lead.
- Avoid hobbies such as making stained glass, soldering or making fishing sinkers that use lead in and around where children will be.
- Do not use home remedies or cosmetics that contain lead like Azarcon, Greta, Pay-loo-ah, and Alkohol or Kohl.



### Keep your child safe from lead in keys

- Never allow a child to play with car or house keys. Bring play keys or another toy along on trips.
- Pregnant women should minimize their exposure by washing their hands after handling keys.



California Childcare Health Program  
UCSF School of Nursing  
cchp.ucsf.edu  
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