

# What Your Child's Lead Test Means

July 2022

There is no safe level of lead in the body. A child can be hurt by lead and still look healthy. Lead can harm a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. The only way to find out if your child has been exposed to lead is with a blood test.

Children are usually first tested with a capillary test – a small amount of blood taken from a finger, heel or toe – at their 1- and 2-year-old well child visits. If lead is detected in your child's blood, they may need to be monitored or the result may need to be checked again with a venous test. This test uses blood from a vein (often in the arm). The venous test result is more accurate.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact [AHS.HealthyHomes@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.HealthyHomes@vermont.gov).

## What can you do?

- Getting your child tested for lead is the first step. You did this!
- Schedule a venous test if your child's level is 3.5 µg/dL (micrograms per deciliter) or higher.
- No matter what your child's blood lead level is, learn how to protect your child from being exposed to lead. Visit [HealthVermont.gov/lead](https://HealthVermont.gov/lead) or call the Healthy Homes Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 802-863-7220 or 800-439-8550.

Capillary blood test result	When to confirm with a venous blood test	
No detected lead	<b>No confirmation needed.</b> There is no detected lead in your child's blood.	
Detected lead – 3.4 µg/dL	<b>Monitor over the next 6 months with another test.</b> There is very little lead in your child's blood. Review sources of lead to keep your child's lead level from rising.	
3.5 – 9 µg/dL	<b>1 month to 3 months.</b> If confirmed, your child has more lead than most children. Take steps to reduce sources of lead. The Health Department will contact you to help you find sources of lead.	
10 – 44 µg/dL	<b>2 weeks to 1 month.</b> If confirmed, your child's lead level is high. You and your doctor should act quickly to reduce sources of lead and discuss your child's diet, growth and development. The Health Department can visit your home to help you find where lead may be coming from.	
45 – 59 µg/dL	<b>48 hours</b>	If confirmed, your child will need medical treatment right away. Consult with your doctor and reduce lead sources immediately.
60+ µg/dL	<b>Immediately</b>	The Health Department can visit your home to help you find where lead may be coming from.
The higher the capillary test result, the more urgent the need to confirm with a venous test.		
Your child's test result _____ µg/dL      Date _____		



**HealthVermont.gov/Test4Lead**  
**802-863-7220**



## How to Prevent Lead Poisoning

In Vermont, most lead poisoning comes from swallowing invisible lead dust that comes from peeling and chipping paint. The dust clings to fingers and objects that children put in their mouths. Houses built before 1978 likely have lead paint. Here's what you can do prevent lead poisoning:

### Maintain



- Check for chipping, peeling, cracked or disturbed paint.
- Install window well inserts to provide a smooth cleaning surface.
- Use lead-safe work practices – such as wet sanding and wet scraping.

### Clean



- Use only a vacuum with a HEPA filter, and vacuum slowly.
- Wet mop floors and use wet disposable towels on windowsills and surfaces.
- Leave shoes at the door to avoid tracking in soil that contains lead.
- Wash children's toys often to remove invisible lead dust.

### Eat healthy



- Serve children fruits, vegetables and dairy products, as well as iron-rich foods.
- Plant vegetable and other food gardens in lead-free soil.
- Wash children's hands often, especially before meals, naps and bedtime.
- Serve snacks and meals to children at the table or in their highchairs.

### Watch for other sources of lead

Lead can also be found in soil, water, and products, such as keys, toys, and antiques.



- Have your drinking water tested for lead. Learn more at [HealthVermont.gov/water/lead](https://www.healthvermont.gov/water/lead).
- Run water until cold for cooking, drinking and making formula.
- Keep children from playing in bare soil near roadways and older houses.
- Do not let children play with metal keys.
- Do not store food in open cans or pottery.
- Keep children away from certain hobbies, like making bullets or stained glass.
- Be aware of products that have been recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission ([www.cpsc.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov)).