Are You Pregnant?

Protect your baby from lead poisoning.

• Lead poisoning is caused by breathing or swallowing lead.
• Lead can pass from a mother to her unborn baby.
• Ask your medical provider if you are at risk for lead poisoning.
• You may need a blood test to find out if you have lead in your body that could affect your pregnancy.

For more information: Call your child’s doctor or your local health department.

Division of Environmental Health
Children’s Environmental Health Branch
(888) 774-0071
State of North Carolina
Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Dee Freeman, Secretary

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Why is lead harmful?
• Lead can put you at risk for miscarriage.
• Lead can cause your baby to be born too early or too small.
• Lead can hurt your baby’s brain, kidneys and central nervous system.
• Lead can cause your child to have learning or behavior problems.

Where is lead found?
• Paint and dust in older homes, especially dust from renovation or repairs.
• Candy, make-up, glazed pots and folk medicine made in other countries.
• Worksites involving battery manufacturing, construction, furniture refinishing, automotive repair and plumbing.
• Soil and tap water.
• Vinyl mini-blinds.

What should I do to avoid lead?
• Avoid lead dust.
• Avoid certain hobbies.
• Furniture refinishing, stained-glass and jewelry-making may expose you to lead. Avoid using imported ceramic pottery.
  • Do not use dishes that are chipped or cracked.
  • Use caution when eating candies, spices and other foods that have been brought into the country.
• Use a damp cloth to dust, and mop to keep lead dust cleaned up.
• If you are pregnant, do not stay in the house during painting or remodeling of a room with lead paint.

What can I do to protect myself and my baby?

Eat foods high in calcium, iron and vitamin C.
• Calcium: milk, yogurt, cheese and green, leafy vegetables such as spinach.
• Iron: red meat, beans, iron-fortified cereals, raisins and spinach.
• Vitamin C: oranges, green and red peppers, broccoli, tomatoes and vitamin C-fortified fruit juices.

• Wash your hands, especially before you eat.
  • This will keep lead dust you may have touched from getting into your body.

• Talk to your provider about medicines and vitamins.
  • Some home remedies and dietary supplements may have lead in them.
  • Tell your provider about any cravings you are having, such as eating dirt or clay, because they may have lead in them.

Questions?
Call (888) 774-0071