



Poison HOTLINE

Partnership between Iowa Health System and
University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics

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Did you know

The director of the ISPC regularly conducts lectures on synthetic and prescription drugs of abuse around the state.

Upcoming lectures are now posted and regularly updated at

www.iowapoisn.org. Click on the "Upcoming Lectures" link on the left side of the ISPC home page to see what communities are hosting lectures and what the lecture topic is. For more detailed information on how to attend any of the listed lectures, call the ISPC at 1-800-222-1222.

Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning is preventable. Lead-based paint was used in residential housing for decades before its use was banned in 1978, and any home built before 1978 likely contains some lead paint. Lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust (the dust created when lead-based paint disintegrates) are the two main sources of lead exposures in children. Young children may become lead poisoned when they eat paint chips, or when they get lead-contaminated dust or soil on their hands and then put their hands in their mouths.

Less common sources of lead poisoning include: home health remedies such as *azarcon* and *greta*, which are used to treat upset stomach or indigestion in the Hispanic community; imported candy, jewelry and cosmetics; pottery and ceramics; and fishing weights and ammunition.

No safe threshold for lead exposure has been determined—therefore NO amount of lead in the body is considered safe. The Center for Disease Control has set the standard for an elevated blood lead level (BLL) in adults at 25 ug/dL. Children are especially susceptible to the health effects from lead and absorb more lead than adults do. As a result, a BLL is considered elevated for children at a level of 10 ug/dL, and in 2012 there were recommendations to reduce this level to 5 ug/dL.

Symptoms of lead poisoning vary depending on the individual and the duration of the lead exposure. Many children present "asymptomatic" yet have subtle effects on growth, hearing, neuro-cognitive development and fine-motor skill. Symptoms in overt lead poisoning often are nonspecific, such as anorexia, headache, sporadic vomiting and abdominal pain ("lead colic"). Children with very high lead levels may have encephalopathy, ataxia, seizures and coma.

Diagnosis and treatment are based on the BLL and symptoms. For questions regarding lead exposures and treatment, please call Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222**.

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Certified Specialist in Poison Information*

POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222

The logo for Poison Help. It features the word "POISON" in a bold, black, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the word "Help" is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. To the right of the word "Help" is a red pill bottle with a white cap and a white skull and crossbones symbol on its side. Below the word "Help" and the pill bottle is the phone number "1-800-222-1222" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Post and share this edition of **Poison Hotline** with your colleagues. Send comments or questions to Poison Hotline, 712-234-8775 (fax) or nobletf@ihs.org. To subscribe or unsubscribe from this distribution list, contact the Iowa Poison Center education office at 712-279-3717. Read past issues of **Poison Hotline** at www.iowapoisn.org.