



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Know your risk. Control your risks.

Your health can be damaged from lead exposure below OSHA action levels:

- Damage can be permanent.
- Damage can occur even if you have no symptoms.
- Damage may not be detected until years after exposure to lead.
- Damage can happen to family members if you spread lead dust to your car or home on skin, clothes or tools.
- Damage can happen with short-term or long-term exposure to lead.
- OSHA does not regulate all work places, sports clubs, or private homes where you may get exposed.

Common jobs and hobbies with high lead exposure include:

- Manufacturing storage batteries or metal products
- Construction and renovation
- Industrial resurfacing or painting
- Metal and electronics recycling
- Radiator repair
- Vehicle body work
- Firing guns and casting or reloading ammunition

Iowa Department of Public Health
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Iowa Department of Public Health



Adult Lead Safety

What you should know
to protect yourself and
your family

idph.iowa.gov



How does exposure occur?

Lead dust or fumes can be inhaled or ingested.

What health damage can low levels of lead cause?

- Increase blood pressure which can increase your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.
- Decrease brain function, making it difficult to think, learn, and remember.
- Harm the physical and mental development of your baby before it is born or increase the risk of miscarriage.
- Harm almost any part of your body including your kidneys, blood, heart, brain and nerves.

There is no known safe level of lead exposure for children or adults. The current public health reference value for adults is a blood lead level of 5 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$).

How can I protect myself?

Take steps to protect the health of you and your family. Remember: lead can be brought into your home and family vehicle from your skin, work clothes or equipment.

- **Wash** your hands and face before eating, drinking or smoking.
- **Eat, drink and smoke** only in areas free of lead dust and fumes.
- **Wear** a clean, properly fitted PAPR or respirator with HEPA filter in all areas that have lead dust or fumes. Shave to get the best fit with respirators. A fit check and medical evaluation are needed.
- **Change** into different clothes and shoes at work. Keep street clothes and shoes in a clean place.
- **Shower** before going home.
- **Launder** clothes separately from other family members' clothes.

Pregnant women, those planning to get pregnant or women breastfeeding should have a blood lead level below $5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ to protect their health and the baby.

Contact Us for More Information

Iowa Department of Public Health
Occupational Health & Safety Surveillance
515-281-4930/800-972-2026
idph.iowa.gov – search for adult blood lead

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What should I tell my doctor or medical provider?

Your doctor or medical provider needs to know if you work with lead. Tell your doctor or medical provider:

- What you do at work or home that exposes you to lead.
- How long you have been working with lead.
- If you think working with lead is making you sick.
- If you have any hobbies or part-time jobs that could expose you to lead.
- If you have worked with lead in jobs or hobbies in the past.
- If you are doing renovation or repair in a home built before 1978.
- If you have had a blood lead test in the past and the result (number).
- If you were ever moved to different duties at work or had to be off work because your lead level was high.
- If you are a woman who is pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant and working with lead.
- If you have preschool children in your home. Ask your medical provider to do a blood lead test every year at 1, 2 and 3 years of age. Consider testing through age 5.

