

# Testing your Child for Lead

## What to Expect at the Doctor's Visit



**A blood lead test is the only way to know if your child has been exposed to lead.** Toddlers at ages 1 and 2 are more likely to be exposed to lead. Young children can get lead dust or lead paint chips into their bodies because they often put their hands, toys or other things in their mouths. They also play where lead dust may be – like on floors and near windowsills. Dust from lead-based paint used in homes built before 1978 is the most common way children are exposed to lead.

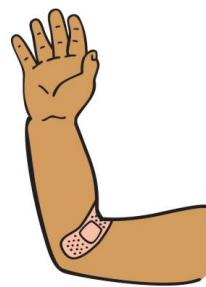
### Test your child for lead at ages 1 and 2.

Federal law mandates that all children enrolled in Medicaid (OHP) are required to get blood lead screening tests at ages 12 and 24 months. Any child between 24 and 72 months with no record of a previous blood lead screening test must receive one. Talk with your doctor about a blood lead test for your child.

**Children younger than 6 years old and not enrolled in OHP may also need a blood lead test** if any of the following apply to you and your family.

- My child is enrolled or attends Head Start.
- My child has never been tested.
- The place where my child lives or regularly visits (such as a school or child care) was built before 1950.
- The place where my child lives was built before 1978, and there have been recent repairs to my home.
- Someone who lives with the child may work with lead. Examples: house painters, contractors, metal recyclers.
- My child has a brother, sister or neighbor who has had lead poisoning.
- We have pottery or ceramics made in other countries or lead crystal or pewter that are used for cooking, storing or serving food or drink
- My child has taken any traditional home remedies or used imported cosmetics
- My child was adopted from, lived in or visited another country.

**How is a blood lead test done?** A child's blood test can be either a finger or toe prick (capillary test) or by drawing blood from a vein (venous test).



Venous (Arm) Test



Capillary (Finger) Test

Some blood lead tests are done right in the doctor's office. Other doctors may give you a lab slip to have the blood test done at a lab. Bring this slip to the lab when your child goes for the lead test.

**What to do after a blood lead test?** Ask your doctor for the results. If a capillary test is high, your child will need a venous test because it is more exact. If a venous test is high, the Oregon Health Authority or your local health department will work with you to find out what caused the high level of lead in your child's blood. Follow-up blood lead tests will be needed to make sure your child's lead level is going down.

For more information visit  
[www.healthoregon.org/lead](http://www.healthoregon.org/lead) or  
call 971-673-0440

