

# LEAD POISONING

## NUTRITION & LEAD POISONING



MARION COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT  
*SM*  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The only way to totally prevent lead poisoning and to lower blood lead levels is to remove all sources of lead. However, certain eating habits and cleanliness can influence the amount of lead absorbed by a child.

### Regular meals

Feeding your child regular meals and snacks will help his/her body to absorb less lead. An empty stomach absorbs more lead. Children should be fed three meals and two or three snacks each day.

### Foods high in iron

If a child has a low body store of iron, the body may absorb more lead. Iron-rich foods should be served at least twice a day. The following foods are rich in iron:

- red meats and poultry • nuts and sunflower seeds • raisins, dates and prunes
- oysters, clams and mussels • fish, tuna and salmon • green leafy vegetables
- dried beans and peas • iron-fortified cereals



Talk to your doctor/nurse/nutritionist for age-appropriate foods for your child.

### Foods high in calcium

Foods high in calcium also help the body to absorb less lead. Serve foods high in calcium at least three times each day. Foods rich in calcium include the following:

- milk and milk products • calcium-enriched orange juice • yogurt
- calcium-fortified tofu • cheese and cottage cheese • salmon with bones



### Foods high in vitamin C

Vitamin C helps the body to absorb iron and calcium. Foods that contain vitamin C should be served at least once each day. Some foods that are high in vitamin C include the following:

- oranges • tomatoes • strawberries • potatoes • tangerines • sweet potatoes
- grapefruit • lemons • broccoli • limes • kiwi fruit • cantaloupe



### Good hygiene

Staying clean is also important in protecting children against lead poisoning.

- Wash a child's hands, face and mouth often, especially before meals.
  - Wash bottle nipples, pacifiers and toys that are placed in children's mouths often.
  - Keep children's fingernails short so lead dust cannot be easily trapped.
  - No 30-second rule! Food that has been dropped should be discarded.
- Eat from a clean surface.



■ Areas most frequently missed during hand washing  
■ Less frequently missed  
■ Not missed

Marion County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

(317) 221-2155 / Emergency # (317) 221-2000