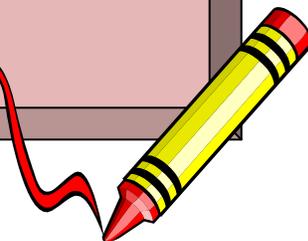


# LEAD IN CRAYONS



Lead is a highly toxic metal that serves no purpose in the human body. Lead can be found in soil, toys, crayons, miniblinds, cosmetics, food and other items. For children living or spending time in older homes, breathing in or swallowing lead dust from old paint is the most common cause of lead poisoning. However, anything kids chew on or swallow that contains lead may cause high lead levels in their blood.

Lead poisoning in children, even in small amounts, can permanently damage the child's nervous system. This can cause reduced IQ, learning problems, slowed growth, hyperactivity and irritability. Higher levels of lead poisoning can cause permanent brain damage and even death. In adults, lead poisoning causes high blood pressure and headaches, memory loss and concentration problems. In pregnant women, lead can cause premature births and smaller babies.



The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) releases daily recalls of products containing lead. In January 1994, 11 brands of crayons were recalled by CPSC. Some brands on the list contained enough lead to poison a child just from chewing them without being exposed to any other lead source. Though many crayons are labeled nontoxic, there are several cases that have occurred in which they are actually contaminated with lead.

The best way to assure that your crayons are safe is to check that the label states "conforms to ASTM D4236." This means they have been reviewed by a toxicologist for chronic hazards and meet the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials.



It's always a good idea to have children wash hands after coloring or playing outside and before eating or naptime to prevent possible lead poisoning.

Many lead poisoned children do not show any sign of sickness. The only way to tell if a child is lead poisoned is to have a blood lead test done by your health care provider or your local health department.

**For a complete list of lead recalls, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). Join the CPSC mailing list to stay up to date on all new lead recalls.**

For more information on lead poisoning, contact:

**Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services**

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65109

(573) 751-6102 or toll free (866) 628-9891

[www.dhss.mo.gov/ChildhoodLead/index.html](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/ChildhoodLead/index.html)

