

When should pregnant and breastfeeding women get a blood lead test?

Health care providers can use this brief questionnaire to assess lead risks at the first prenatal visit for each pregnant woman, or if possible, during a pre-conception visit. Some health care providers who serve high-risk populations may choose to conduct blood lead testing on all pregnant women. Because evidence of lead exposure is often not apparent, providers should assess lead risks for pregnant and breastfeeding women regardless of clinical signs.

Risk Assessment Questionnaire for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women

YES	NO	Don't Know	
			1. Do you or others in your household have a job that involves lead exposure?*
			2. Do you or others in your household have hobbies or activities likely to cause lead exposure?*
			3. During the last 12 months, did you move to Vermont from a major metropolitan area?
			4. Do you live in a house built before 1978 that is currently being renovated, or has visible chipping or peeling paint?
			5. Do you drink or eat out of handmade or imported pottery, leaded crystal or other vintage dishware?
			6. Do you use any traditional folk medicines that are not sold in a regular drug store or are homemade?
			7. Do you use any imported cosmetics or spices?
			8. Do you eat or chew on any non-food items, such as clay, crushed pottery, soil, or paint chips?
			9. Do you have any bullets in your body from past gunshot wounds?
			10. Have you been diagnosed with lead poisoning in the past?
			11. Does your house have lead plumbing (i.e., pipes, fixtures, fittings, etc.)?
<p>Questions 1-10: Pregnant or breastfeeding women who answer "Yes" or "Don't Know" should have a blood lead test. Question 11: Pregnant or breastfeeding women who answer "Yes" or "Don't Know" should follow Health Department testing and treatment guidance for lead in drinking water found at: http://healthvermont.gov/drinking-water/lead. Women should also be tested if they have concerns about lead not addressed by this questionnaire.</p>			

Information on lead hazards and how to reduce exposure can be found at:
<http://healthvermont.gov/environment/home/lead>

***Examples of Lead-Related Hobbies, Occupations, and Industries**

Artists, including painters, ceramics, jewelry and stained glass workers Auto repairers Battery manufacturers Construction, bridge and demolition workers Firing range workers and gunsmiths Glass manufacturers Lead abatement workers Lead manufacturers, refiners, smelters and miners Manufacturers of bullets, fishing sinkers, industrial machinery, and electrical components Painter and paint/pigment manufacturers	Plastic manufacturers Plumbers and pipe fitters Police officers and armed forces members Radiator repairers Recyclers of metal, glass, electronics and batteries Remodelers and renovators of houses or buildings Restorers/refinishers of antique products/furniture Rubber product manufacturers Shipbuilders Solid waste incinerator operators Splicers, manufacturers and strippers of cable or wire Steel welders
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Blood Lead Level (BLL) Actions for Pregnant Women

BLL (µg/dL)	Recommended Actions
≤5	Provide information on possible sources of lead and information on how to reduce or eliminate exposure, including nutrition information.
5-9	<i>Above action plus:</i> If result was from CAPILLARY test, confirm with a VENOUS test. Attempt to determine sources of lead exposure and counsel on how to reduce the exposure For job-related exposure, ensure use of personal protective equipment. Assess nutritional adequacy. Perform follow-up test within 1 month. Obtain a maternal BLL or cord BLL at delivery.
10-14	<i>Above actions plus:</i> Refer job-related exposed women to occupational medicine specialists and recommend removal from exposure. Perform follow-up test within 1 month. Obtain a maternal BLL or cord BLL at delivery.
15-44	<i>Above actions plus:</i> Perform follow-up test within 1 month and then every 2-3 months. Obtain a maternal BLL or cord BLL at delivery. More-frequent testing may be indicated based on risk factor history.
25-44	<i>Above actions plus:</i> Perform follow-up test within 1-4 weeks and then every month. Obtain a maternal BLL or cord BLL at delivery.
≥45	<i>Above actions plus:</i> Perform follow-up test within 24 hours and then at frequent intervals depending on clinical interventions and trend in BLLs. Obtain a maternal BLL or cord BLL at delivery. Consider chelation in consultation with lead poisoning prevention expert. Treat as high-risk pregnancy.

Source: CDC's Guidelines for the Identification and Management of Lead Exposure in Pregnant and Lactating Women.

For more information contact the Healthy Homes Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (802) 863-7220 or (800) 439-8550 (toll-free in Vermont) or visit healthvermont.gov