

# Healthy News – Lead Poisoning

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**PROMOTE** Lead is a toxic metal that can be found in many different products, most commonly found in lead-based paint and lead dust. Houses built before 1978 are at risk of containing lead-based paint and dust. Children who are exposed to lead paint dust, and chips (by breathing it or eating it), can end up with lead in their bodies. If too much lead accumulates in the child's blood, they could be at risk for developing childhood lead poisoning. Symptoms include learning and behavior problems, slow growth and development, hearing and speech problems and more. South Heartland District Health Department serves Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, and Webster counties. In these counties, two out of three houses were built before 1978 and could be at risk for containing lead paint or dust.



**PREVENT** If your home was built before 1978—or you suspect it might be—you can have it tested for lead. South Heartland District Health Department encourages simple cleaning practices, such as wet-mopping floors and wiping down windowsills and play areas, to reduce harmful lead dust. When renovating, always use lead-safe methods to avoid spreading dust. Remember, lead isn't only found in paint—it can also be present in certain cookware, foods, spices, traditional medicines, toys, and jewelry. You can also protect your child by providing meals rich in iron and calcium, which help reduce the body's absorption of lead.

**PROTECT** To protect your child, ask your primary care provider about recommended lead testing at 12 and 24 months of age. If your child has elevated blood lead levels, South Heartland District Health Department can connect your family with resources and next steps. Protecting children from lead poisoning helps them grow up healthier, ready to learn, and better able to reach their full potential.

**No level of lead is a safe level!**