

Who should be tested?

- > Pregnant women and women planning a pregnancy should be tested because lead in the blood is passed from the mother to her unborn baby.
- > Babies and pre-school children should have regular tests as they are at increased risk of elevated blood lead levels.

Where can a blood lead test be taken?

Environmental Health Centre

An appointment can be made by phoning 8638 4100 or calling into the Centre.

IMVS

Pregnant women who have routine blood tests at the IMVS may request extra blood be taken for lead analysis.

The Environmental Health Centre provides services free of charge.

Pregnancy and Lead



For more information

Environmental Health Centre
117 Gertrude Street
PORT PIRIE SA 5540
Telephone: 8638 4100
www.health.sa.gov.au
www.pprhs.sa.gov.au

Non-English speaking: for information in languages other than English, call the Interpreting and Translating Centre and ask them to call The Department of Health. This service is available at no cost to you, contact (08) 8226 1990.

© Department of Health, Government of South Australia.
All rights reserved. ISBN: 978-1-74243-023-2
FIS: 9234.1. Printed December 2009.

Pregnancy and Lead

Protect your baby

Pregnant women pass lead to their unborn babies through their bloodstream. A newborn baby's blood lead level will be the same as his/her mother.

There is some evidence that high lead levels can increase the risk of pre-term delivery, low birth weight, miscarriage and stillborn.

All children under 4 years of age are at greater risk than adults and other children.

This is because:-

- > Their developing brains and nervous systems are vulnerable.
- > Children absorb more of the lead that is taken into their bodies than adults.
- > Normal behaviours of young children like crawling, hand-to-mouth activities and chewing on objects make them more likely to come into contact with lead and swallow it.

A blood lead test on yourself during pregnancy will provide a baseline result for your baby.

Create a safe environment for your new baby

NOTE: Renovation always creates dust, which can severely impact those living in the home at the time. Ensure pregnant and breastfeeding women along with young children are protected during renovation. The best method to do this is for them to stay somewhere else.

- > Seal all cracks and gaps in ceilings and walls.
- > Damp dust the tops of fans and light fittings.
- > Wash curtains & make sure windows seal well.
- > Shampoo carpets (EHC have a free carpet shampooer that you can borrow).
- > Place baby's cot/bassinet away from windows and curtains.



Eating healthy foods helps reduce the amount of lead that your body absorbs

Ensure an adequate diet by including:-

Calcium

Low fat milk, cheese, custard, yoghurt, nuts (especially almonds).

Iron

Red meat, chicken, fish, eggs, lentils, dark green leafy vegetables.

Always remember regular washing and drying your hands is still one of the most effective ways to keep lead out of your body.