



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
of HEALTH SERVICES**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DHS Recommends Blood Lead Tests for All Children**

Tests now encouraged for children ages 1 and 2, and those aged 3-5 who have not been previously tested

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) recommends universal blood lead testing for children living in Wisconsin. Universal testing means all children should receive a blood lead test at ages 1 and 2 as well as any child between ages 3 and 5 who has not had a previous test. Children under 6 residing in the city of Milwaukee require additional testing per local health department guidelines.

Childhood lead poisoning remains a serious public health threat, despite significant progress in recent decades. Every year, thousands of children in Wisconsin are poisoned by exposure to lead in their environment. Lead, a toxic metal, can cause irreversible damage to a child's developing brain, affecting their learning, behavior, and future potential. A simple blood test can detect lead exposure early, allowing parents and health care providers to take crucial steps to protect a child's health. Depending on the child's blood lead level, these crucial next steps could include:

- Finding and removing lead hazards from the child's environment.
- Providing the child a diet high in iron and calcium.
- Connecting the child to early educational services.
- Scheduling follow-up blood lead testing.

"Early detection is key in preventing devastating consequences of lead poisoning," said DHS Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson. "A blood test is a quick procedure that can provide invaluable information about a child's exposure to lead. With early intervention, we can minimize the long-term effects and ensure children reach their full potential."

Why early detection matters:

- It's not obvious: Lead poisoning often shows no obvious symptoms, making early detection through blood tests crucial.
- It can help minimize harm: Early identification of lead poisoning, through the testing of young children, allows for prompt action to eliminate sources of lead exposure and minimize harm.
- It can improve outcomes: With early action and support, children exposed to lead can achieve better developmental outcomes.

Early detection and intervention are critical in protecting children from the harmful effects of lead poisoning. Parents and caregivers should talk with their child's health care provider today and get a blood lead test scheduled. Visit [CDC's Recommended Actions Based on Blood Lead Level](#) page for additional information on follow-up and case management of children who have lead levels above the blood lead reference value.

Get more information about [pediatric lead testing](#) and reporting and the [DHS universal blood lead testing recommendation](#) on our website.

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